

# America

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FEBRUARY 8, 1947

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK



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PERIODICAL

FEB 8 - 1947

DEPOSIT

## SINARCHISM TODAY

*Divided counsels; what does the future hold?*

JAMES A. MAGNER

## WANTED: MORE HOMES

*Not oratory or explanations, but roofs over our heads*

WILLIAM J. GIBBONS

## THAT PARISH AT WEST POINT

*How Catholics fare in the Army's training school*

ROBERT A. GRAHAM

## WHAT GOES HERE?

*What you stand for depends on where you stand*

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

### WASHINGTON FRONT

*Charles Lucey*

### PARADE

*John A. Toomey*

### THE WORD

*William A. Donaghy*

### THEATRE

*Theophilus Lewis*

## —from the business office

### Dear Reader

For the past year, we have been undergoing growing pains with our new *Catholic Children's Book Club*. Anything new requires an unusual amount of time, energy and imagination to get it working properly, and efficiency never does come overnight.

It began just over a year ago. There seemed to be a need for such a book club for Catholic children, and the growth of our club to over 3,300 members in a year seems to indicate that feeling was right.

Our membership was attained in various ways—by letters, through advertisements in *America*, *The Catholic Mind*, and many diocesan papers—and through the cooperation of many friends, particularly the Sisters in the schools, all of whom have been most helpful. But we want to tell you how the fulfillment part of our Book Club operates.

The aim of our *Catholic Children's Book Club* is to secure the best possible books, as close to the publication date as we can. In order to do this, the books must be read well in advance of publication. We must have the books in our own shipping room 30 days before the month in which we mail them. It does take time, as you might imagine, to wrap, address and stamp over 3,000 packages each month, in addition to all the other mailing entailed in the operation of our publishing business.

Book publishers send us, well in advance of publication date, galley proofs of the new books. These are long sheets, each containing the equivalent of three pages of the finished book. As these are received, they are examined first by Father Gibbons, the Executive Secretary, who then assigns them to members of the Selections Committee for reading.

As each member of the Selections Committee reads the galley proofs, he or she makes out a card, reporting his or her opinion on the book, and sends it to Father Gibbons. Then the galleys are sent to another member for reading, so that finally all of them will have had an oppor-

tunity to read each worthwhile title.

There are four members on the Selections Committee: Miss Helen M. Brogan, Miss Dorothy Cromien, Sister Mary Agnes (all of New York City) and Mr. Francis X. McDermott, of Brooklyn. All are trained librarians, working with books for children and young people, and well familiar with their taste and likings.

These members have been unselfish in working for the Book Club, spending considerable time reading galley proofs (which sound intriguing but really are most unwieldy and cumbersome to read), watching the new titles, the trends in juvenile interest, etc.

Once a month the Selections Committee meets in the Business Office for a discussion of the prospective titles. Comments and criticisms fly back and forth, as the members debate the merit and demerit of the books under consideration.

It is not enough that the book be a good book. The Selections Committee is always trying to find the best available titles, but they must also consider reading levels, previous books selected for that group, and such a fact that our intermediate group is for both boys and girls; so that an otherwise most satisfactory book for that group, but aimed directly at girls, cannot be used because the boys would not like it. And vice versa.

They are choosing books for a very wide audience, in the largest group (the intermediate), trying to fit the reading tastes of more than a thousand youngsters, scattered from coast to coast and abroad, in metropolitan areas and on farms and ranches. The marvel to us is that they succeed so well.

Finally, the Committee reaches its decision, and the titles are selected for the coming months, sometimes as far as six months in advance. Orders are placed with the publishers, and they arrange to deliver the books to our shipping room 30 days before the month in which they are used.

And we sit down for a minute to catch our breath, before the whirl of the next month begins.

*The Business Office*

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## *Mr. Stalin's incorrigible "Pravda"*

The world has long accepted *Pravda*, Communist Party organ, as the mouthpiece of the Moscow government. Articles and pronouncements appearing in it have, as a rule, reflected the foreign policy of the Kremlin. Any disharmony between the communist organ and its chief is simply unthinkable. Yet a curious phenomenon has appeared. Mr. Bevin, British Foreign Secretary, made a speech on December 22, 1946, which, as he himself said, was designed to dispel criticism of Left-Wingers in Parliament that the British Government has "joined too closely in its policies with the United States," and that "its relations with Russia are not so close as they should be." Mr. Bevin, denying this charge, asserted that "Britain does not tie herself to anybody, except in regard to her obligations under the United Nations Charter." For twenty-four days *Pravda* completely ignored the statement. Then on January 15, 1947 it suddenly came out with a violent blast against the British Foreign Secretary, accusing him of wrecking the British-Soviet alliance treaty. On January 18, Mr. Bevin sent a note to Premier Stalin, demanding an explanation. The answer was a flat rebuttal of *Pravda's* barrage against Mr. Bevin. Mr. Stalin made it clear that, although Mr. Bevin's statement at first caused him "some perplexity," it should be evident that both "share the same viewpoint with regard to the Anglo-Soviet treaty." Yet on the very same day *Pravda* reiterated its charges against Mr. Bevin, a thing that took by surprise even the most authoritative "experts" on Soviet politics. What lies behind these charges and reassurances? We must conclude that behind this game of doubletalk some Soviet plan is being hatched. Perhaps Field-marshal Montgomery's latest visit to the Kremlin did not reassure Stalin as to the future of British-Soviet relations. If such is the case, then it would seem logical to assume that *Pravda's* prodding of Mr. Bevin is intended to get from London a reaffirmation of the alliance treaty. Or it may have been destined to "soften" the British and American delegates to the forthcoming conference in Moscow, which the Russians suspect will not go very smoothly.

## *Cable to Ernest Bevin*

Only one thing stands between Soviet Russia and domination of Western Europe—the unwillingness of Britain and the United States to follow a policy of appeasement under the guise of promoting world unity. Even before the end of the war in Europe, it was clear that Stalin was talking the language of international cooperation and at the same time pursuing a policy of brutal and apparently insatiable aggression. To its eternal credit it was the British Labor Party which first saw through the hypocrisy of the Kremlin and rebelled against it—remembering, perhaps, the tragic chain of events which

led to Munich, and war—and when, some few months later, President Truman reversed American policy toward Russia and decided to make some sort of stand for the principles for which we fought, free men everywhere lifted up their heads and hope was born again. For more than a year now, by standing together in the defense of democratic principles, Britain and the United States have managed to slow down, if not entirely to contain, the Soviet push. But this policy has not escaped criticism, either here or in Britain. It was to be expected, of course, that Stalin's Fifth Column would work to undermine former Secretary of State James Byrnes and British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin. What caused surprise, though, was the support given this Soviet sabotage by a group of alleged liberals in the United States led by Henry Wallace and in Britain by a disaffected element in the British Labor Party. If the British Labor Party was to weather the storm which had been raised in its ranks, it was very necessary that the British people be made to understand that real American liberals were firmly supporting Messrs. Bevin and Byrnes in their fight for principle. It was necessary to deflate somewhat Mr. Wallace and the motley group about him. Such was the purpose of the cable sent by the *New Leader* to Mr. Bevin on January 22 and signed by 100 prominent Americans. The astonishing reception accorded it by both the British and American press is a heartening sign that the general public is waking up at last to the facts of international life.

## *A test to study*

No thinking about the postwar world can be realistic unless it begins with an obvious fact and accepts an equally obvious principle. The *fact* is that there are two worlds today, not one—the world represented by what remains of Western civilization, and the world represented by Soviet totalitarianism. The *principle* is that appeasement of tyranny and aggression can never bring peace to men. The *New Leader* cable to Mr. Bevin emphasizes these capital points and places them in their proper setting. "We are but a few of the large proportion of American liberals," it reads, "who remain uncompromisingly opposed to any and all forms of oppression and tyranny." For this reason the signers repudiate those who, by raising the red herring of "imperialism," are striving to divide Britain and America, in an effort "to prevent effective common policy or common action in relation to the ambitions and unilateral acts of Soviet Russia."

The real purpose of the cry of "imperialism" against Britain and America, at the very moment when British and American imperialism are on the wane from the Philippines to Burma, can only be to divert attention from Soviet imperialism which, in defiance of solemn treaties, has annexed tens of millions of



unwilling subjects, has rubbed out the sovereignty of some nations and made puppets of others, and has extended the rule of the secret police from Manchuria and the Kurile Islands to the suburbs of Trieste.

The purpose of Anglo-American foreign policy should be, the signers say, not only to halt the retreat before Soviet imperialism "but to widen the area of freedom." While they recognize that neither Britain nor the United States is perfect, they know that both countries have a "tradition and heritage of liberty," a "respect for the dignity of man and the sanctity of human life;" and that by comparison Soviet Russia is a throwback to the dark days of ancient slavery. Consequently, the U. S. and Britain must remain united in the face of Soviet aggression, "until the day when a limited world government, free from the veto power," is able to enforce peace with justice. Otherwise totalitarianism will inherit the modern world.

### *Peace in the marketplace*

At no time since the end of the war has the prospect for industrial peace seemed more favorable than it did last week. The United Steelworkers (CIO) agreed to extend the present contract, due to expire February 15, with the United States Steel and Bethlehem Steel corporations to April 30, thereby indicating that both sides are intent on coming to an agreement without the repetition of last year's strike. Breaking new ground, the United States Rubber Company signed a nationwide contract with the CIO Rubber Workers and very probably set a pattern for the rest of the industry. Their demands far apart from what employers were willing to give, the National Maritime Union has suggested arbitration. Even in the turbulent auto industry, despite two or three swash-buckling speeches by General Motors officials, there was some reason to hope for the best. The Chrysler Corporation and the United Automobile Workers agreed to extend the present contract thirty days to permit further negotiations. With only a few exceptions, the meat packers and the United Packinghouse Workers have already arrived at agreements and the outlook for peace in that industry could scarcely be better. It may well be that leaders of labor and management, conscious of the growing public conviction that they are unable to settle their affairs without government assistance, decided that discretion is truly the better part of valor. Little as some of them like one another, they like the idea of government intervention even less.

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### *The Case strike*

As this is being written the strike at the J. I. Case Company in Racine, Wisconsin, is in its three-hundred and ninety-third day. Here we have a situation where the workers are represented by an honest, democratic, law-abiding union (Local 180, UAW-CIO), a union which endured almost insufferable provocation from management during the war and yet did not strike, a union which has dealt patiently with every legal body, Federal and State, having jurisdiction over its case, a union which struck only after every recourse to a peaceful settlement had been exhausted and which is still prepared to submit its just demands to arbitration. And on the other hand we have a management which has flouted the War Labor Board, which has been found guilty of unfair labor practices by the National Labor Relations Board, which has refused the services of Federal conciliators, and which has carried on a persistent, vicious campaign against the rights of its employees and the union which represents them. In many industrial disputes the issues are confused, and good and bad are mixed on both sides. But this is not true of the Case strike. Before the bar of fair-minded public opinion, this company, and its blind, stubborn, arrogant and dictatorial president, L. R. Clausen, must be condemned for conduct that is at once un-American and un-Christian. To the employees of the Case Company, our heartfelt sympathy. In their long, trying, courageous struggle for justice, let them not forget the promise of Jesus Christ: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill."

### *UNESCO in 1947*

In his paper on "The Paradox of UNESCO," delivered at the recent Boston meeting of the Association of American Colleges, President George N. Shuster of Hunter College began with the statement that "no doubt the first thing to say about UNESCO, sorrowingly and not irately, is that most people haven't the foggiest notion of what it is planning to do." Schools and colleges, clubs and public speakers can help remedy this situation by becoming acquainted with and disseminating the information contained in three UNESCO publications: *Looking at the World through Textbooks* (mimeographed), *The Teacher and the Post-War Child in War-Devastated Countries* and *Report on the Program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*. From the latter these "Projects to be Undertaken in 1947" in the field of education are taken:

1. Establishment of a small committee of experts to make a general inquiry on the education provided in primary and secondary schools in various countries to foster international understanding.
2. Collaboration with schools, colleges and out-of-school agencies in sponsoring the establishment of clubs which should stress citizenship in the community, nation and world.
3. Encouraging voluntary organizations to establish reconstruction camps for youth in war-devastated countries.
4. A conference of leaders in adult education to



exchange information about methods and techniques.

5. A conference to survey existing arrangements for training in international relations in higher institutions.

6. An international educational seminar in the summer of 1947.

7. A further study of the problems of an international university.

8. A conference on the teaching of national history in connection with a long-range program for the analysis and revision of textbooks.

9. Establishment, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the Food and Agricultural Organization, of a committee on health education.

10. A study of relations between vocational training and general education.

11. An international conference on education and guidance in secondary and higher education.

12. A study of the problem of handicapped children.

13. Formation of a committee on educational statistics.

14. Publication of an international educational yearbook.

15. Publication of an international educational newsletter or review.

### **The "Stimmen" reborn**

After more than five years of suppression, Germany's Catholic monthly, the *Stimmen der Zeit* ("Voices of the Time") has made its reappearance, and has commenced its seventy-second year of publication, with Father Anton Koch, S. J., as publisher and editor-in-chief. (Munich 22, Veterinärstrasse 9). Started in 1871 and originally entitled *Stimmen aus Maria Laach*, it decided in 1915 upon the present name. In 1928 the magazine was reorganized on progressive lines; but in the fateful year 1933 pressure began to be exerted by the Nazi government. Over and over the editors were tempted to call it a day and give the whole thing up, so incessant and unreasonable were the restrictions. But always the thought prevailed that it was better to keep a little flame burning than to put the fire out altogether. A sharp warning against immorality in government, after the Roehm affair, written by Father Jakob Overmans, S. J., in November, 1939, caused some more heat to be turned on by the Nazis; and Father Lippert's admonitions on the dangers of violence, a year later, brought on a four-month's suppression of the *Stimmen*. Finally, on April 18, 1941, the Gestapo invaded the *Stimmen's* quarters in full force, and stopped its publication altogether, on the ground that one editor (who had been dead four and a half years) was engaged in traitorous practices. Then death invaded the *Stimmen's* staff. Father Alfred Delp, S. J., was sentenced to death and executed February 2, 1945. July 2, 1945 Father C. Noppel died in Stuttgart, and Father Overmans in Cairo. The editor-in-chief, Father Joseph Kreitmaier, S. J., died January 15, 1946. But with crippled staff and wrestling, as do all German religious publications, with the difficult paper shortage, the *Stimmen* is now carrying on, to use their own words, "in a Catholic spirit of wide cooperation with all who seek the same goal, but always with that basic clarity of thought and expression, which alone will ensure the progress and the victory of truth."

### **On the brink of eternity**

For American readers, who may have heard of the Germans as self-pitying, it will be a surprise to see with what ruthless exactitude the *Stimmen's* veteran staff member, Father Max Pribilla, S. J., analyses how "it all happened" in two memorable articles, October and November, 1946. But still more searching, into the very depths of the soul, is the remarkable lengthy monolog on the "Our Father" which is the first article in the reborn issue of the *Stimmen*. It was composed by Father Alfred Delp, S. J., while waiting in prison for his execution, and begins as follows:

On this absolute height of existence to which I have now ascended, many words hitherto current have lost their sense and their value. I cannot even hear them any more. It all lies so far down below. Up here on these lofty crags I am wondering if anybody will climb up and try to cast me down. Time on these heights flies on the wings of angels. You can hear these wings gently rustling in modest respect for all that this secluded existence so imperiously demands. Far, far down below the same old happenings are occurring. They sound like the distant rushing and roaring of narrow streams. Everything is too narrow, too narrow for the true measure and the true scope of life. This was ever my secret intuition and thought; everything is so narrow.—If I seek for words which will retain their sense up here and reveal a new sense of their inner meanings, I discover the words of the ancient prayer, the words of the prayer which the Lord Himself taught us: Our Father.

"These are no human words," said Father Delp, "these are the inner powers which will make man conquer storms and attacks, betrayals. God comes to man's rescue in every phase of his human distress." God grant us all in our ease and peace the faith and courage of those men who learned so mighty a lesson in so hard a way.

### **Human Rights Rings the Bell**

One thousand petitions from aggrieved persons and groups all over the world have posed an unexpected but not entirely unwelcome problem to the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations. Rightly or wrongly, the people of the world seem to believe or hope that this Commission is a Court of Appeal for violations of human rights all over the world. Reporting this situation at its first meeting last week, Henri Laugier, UN Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Social Affairs, said:

Whether we want it or not, approve of it or not, whether we wish or regret it, what has happened is that for all individuals and for all groups in the world who consider themselves as victims of violations of the rights of man, a sort of right of appeal has emerged. . . .

The Commission is not unhappy at these testimonies of confidence but it is puzzled what to do about them. The present powers of the body do not contemplate the holding of hearings or inquiries into alleged violations throughout the world. The dilemma facing the Human Rights body is one arising from abundance of confidence on the part of the peoples of the world. Members of the Commission realize they have "rung the bell" as no

other body of the United Nations has yet been able to do, and they are too surprised to know what to do about their success. The eminently "safe" functions of drawing up an international bill of rights, of making recommendations and of calling conferences, have suddenly appeared to be quite short of what the world expects from this Commission and the United Nations itself. As the Assistant Secretary-General emphasized, "Surely there is one thing on which we all agree, unanimously: these appeals arising from the depths of the conscience of mankind must find an echo, must find in the United Nations a pertinent and just reply." The prestige of the Human Rights Commission is at the highest level. The eighteen members of the body must now prove themselves worthy of this confidence.

### ***Belgium shows good example***

Resettlement of 20,000 displaced persons and their families as coal miners in Belgium has been agreed upon by the Brussels Government. The move, reported by the Inter-Governmental Committee of Refugees, marks the beginning of a series of positive steps to resettle the 1,000,000 refugees in Western Europe who cannot go home. The prospective miners are allowed to bring their families into Belgium, and after a trial period will be eligible for Belgian citizenship. Belgium's example may soon be followed by other nations. Already Brazilian and Argentine missions in Germany are reported "pleasantly surprised" by the high caliber of the human resources found in the American and British zones of Germany. Outside the scope of the IGCR, efforts are now under way to promote immigration of the Balts, Yugoslavs, Poles and Ukrainians to Alaska. During a recent trip to Washington, Col. Anthony Drexel Biddle, chief of the Allied contacts sections of the American HQ in Germany, discussed the possibility with the War and Interior Departments. Meanwhile the British have started putting into use the new international identity documents that are to serve displaced persons in place of passports. They will be the equivalent of the pre-war Nansen passports and will be recognized by the countries belonging to the IGCR which have pledged themselves to honor them. From the American HQ in Frankfurt, Germany, comes news confirming the American position. Gen. Joseph T. McNarney prepared a statement reassuring more than 400,000 DP's in the American zone that they would not be forcibly repatriated to Eastern Europe. Army sources said that the statement is aimed at allaying alarm among refugees which has resulted from a survey of their individual case histories by UNRRA.

### ***Refugees and human rights***

It is no cause for wonder that no one was able—short of war—to safeguard rights of displaced persons caught within the Soviet sphere of influence. What should cause surprise, however, is that American officials ever gave their approbation to some of UNRRA's schemes for repatriation of refugees already under our protection. Perhaps these officials were politically naïve, perhaps just

harried and eager to save money for taxpayers even at the risk of occasioning some new misery. But whatever the cause, some of the UNRRA directives will long remain as a black mark against the American name. UNRRA Administrative Order No. 199, issued as late as November 11, 1946, was the most glaring of their mistakes (Cf. AMERICA, Dec. 28, 1946, p. 339). It seemed to assume that Russian officials, whose ruthlessness had made so many DP's unrepatriable, could become overnight fair enough judges to be allowed in the refugee camps, there to carry on propaganda in favor of repatriation. It also implied that Soviet sources of information as to conditions in the homelands were reliable, and that refugee relief personnel should accept them as true. The earlier directives, Nos. 135 and 141, imposing a moratorium on educational, recreational and cultural activities and work projects in Polish DP camps, were only slightly less objectionable. Subsequent reversal of policy and pressure from the United States have somewhat bettered conditions. So did the removal of the administrative officer responsible for No. 199. But the UNRRA camps will bear close watching for the remainder of that body's existence. What happens when UNRRA ceases to exist as a refugee relief organization is as yet undecided. But one thing is sure: the Western nations had better have ready a really humane organization to take over the work. Otherwise there will be more directives like No. 199 and its antecedents.

### ***Illinois court decision on teaching religion***

The Illinois State Supreme Court has just handed down a unanimous decision sustaining a similarly unanimous decision of the circuit court on the legality of conducting classes in religious instruction in public-school buildings during school time, Said the Court:

Certainly such classes do not violate the freedom of conscience of any individual or group so long as the classes are conducted upon a purely voluntary basis. We do not find . . . anything that would warrant us in finding that there has been any violation of State and Federal guarantees.

The test case was brought to court by a Mrs. Vashti McCollum, a professed atheist, who claimed that her son, a student in one of the public schools, was embarrassed because he was the only pupil in his class not taking religious instruction. Another part of the Supreme Court decision is significant.

Freedom of religion as intended by those who wrote the State and Federal constitutions means the right of an individual to entertain any desired religious belief without interference from the State.

The Government does not recognize a particular faith, but this does not mean that it is indifferent to religious faiths. To deny the existence of religious motivation is to deny the inspiration and authority of the Constitution itself.

At least eleven school systems in Illinois are affected by the decision of the Supreme Court. Since Mrs. McCollum has declared she intends to appeal the decision to the U. S. Supreme Court, the case may set a precedent reaching far beyond the boundaries of any one State.



## Washington Front

It is yet too early to measure the strength of progressive forces in the new Republican-controlled Senate, but they are there on both sides of the middle aisle and they will be heard. Those on the Democratic side are moving to make their case in successive legislative debates the more cogent by virtue of careful research and preparation, relying not merely on loud oratory. Those on the Republican side have already given opposition to Taft leadership and have been able to force compromises.

In recent history, progressive leavening in days of Republican ascendancy in the Senate so often has come out of the west and northwest, with Borah, Norris, La-Follette and others waging battle against Penrose-type bossism. But today two lean and honest New Englanders, Senator Aiken of Vermont and Senator Tobey of New Hampshire, are the granite blocks in the path of the Senate Republican steamroller. Senators Morse of Oregon, Langer of North Dakota and others will be with them from time to time. How many others is the question.

The Republican Senate margin is fairly close—51 seats to 45 for the Democrats (or 44 with Senator Bilbo away). That means that on issues on which the Democrats manage to hold together, it takes only a few Republicans crossing party lines to cause trouble for GOP

leaders. On the first serious test roll call, only one of the fifteen new Republican senators, the mild-mannered but stubborn Kentuckian, Senator Cooper, bucked the Taft leadership. But there are others whose background indicates they may chart an independent course on occasion.

The Democratic progressives beginning to organize more or less formally as a group include Senators Murray, McGrath, Green, Pepper, Myers, Magnuson, Kilgore, Taylor and Thomas of Utah. They probably will be joined frequently by such men as Senators McMahon, Hatch, Hill and Sparkman.

Part of the progressive group met with CIO President Philip Murray to discuss how far CIO leadership is ready to go in accepting labor reforms that are certain to come. At the moment, they stand in the main for the changes proposed by President Truman in the State of the Union message. They certainly will fight sweeping restrictive legislation proposed by some Republicans.

Another battle Democratic progressives have ahead is on the reciprocal trade program. How determined is some of the Republican conservative opposition to this program, designed to facilitate trade relations with foreign countries, has become more evident in the last few days. The Democrats have risen at once to this challenge. In November, Senator Vandenberg's great contribution in erasing the isolationist stigma from the GOP was credited with contributing to the proportions of the Republican victory, but today some Republican senators forget that.

CHARLES LUCEY

## Underscorings

The February Mission intention, "Success of the Chinese Missions Under Peaceful Conditions," should be the occasion, says Msgr. Thomas J. McDonnell, national director of the Propagation of the Faith, for prayerful remembrance of the present grave dangers which confront the Christians and missionaries in unhappy China from the communist forces. Abundant evidence points to a ruthless communist persecution of the Chinese missionaries. Church property is being confiscated, Christians and missionaries tried and condemned by the so-called people's courts, priests and bishops banished. The missionaries are undaunted, but they need our earnest and unceasing prayers.

► As the January *Academia* study, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith has published an exceedingly interesting treatment of *The Laity and the Mission Apostolate*, by Mr. Stephen W. Johnson in collaboration with Rev. Joseph J. Tennant. It would be a precious act of Catholic action to announce this pamphlet from all our Catholic pulpits and to take orders for purchasing copies from either the National Office of the Propagation of the Faith (109 E. 38th St., New York 16) or from the America Press (70 E. 45th St., New York 17).

► From a correspondent we have an appreciation of

Father Francis Mullin, late director of the library of the Catholic University of America, who died on January 2. The writer includes many more when she speaks as one "who knew him very well, and for many long years: first as a very small parishioner of his at St. Raphael's Cathedral, Dubuque; later as his student in medieval history; later still as employe and colleague, and always as the object of his beautiful, steadying inspiration." And she adds: "Beyond all those considerations, he was one of the most forehanded, clear-sighted, energetic, heroic of all apostles of Catholic letters. No one—not even I—has any idea of the number of good things he was behind, even to his last hours."

► Another death to be noted is that of Dr. Thomas F. Hart, on January 21. He was a founder of the Catholic Press Association and for 40 years edited the *Catholic Telegraph*, weekly newspaper of the Cincinnati Archdiocese.

► Villanova College has broken ground for three new buildings to be ready for occupancy by September 1948. They are a memorial library, a chemical engineering building and a naval science and tactics armory. Construction contracts total \$1,200,000.

► The Religious of the Cenacle recently purchased the Col. Clarence S. Wadsworth estate in Middletown, Conn. for use as a retreat house for women. Other Cenacle retreat houses are located at Ronkonkoma, L. I., in New York, Boston, Newport, R. I., St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee and Warrenville, Ill.

A.P.F.



# Editorials

## *Feeding the hungry*

Food will long remain a major problem of international concern. It is no less of a problem because some nations, notably the United States, are already worried about the disastrous effect of surpluses upon their domestic agriculture. If anything, the presence of surpluses amidst so much want points up the real nature of the shortage.

Despite the fact that upwards of two-thirds of the world's population is actively engaged in agriculture or allied industries, a third of the human race is seriously underfed and perhaps a half eats so inadequately that physical stamina is impaired and preventable diseases result. Of course one cannot judge food deficiencies in quantitative terms alone, much less by deviations from one's accustomed diet. But all that is taken into consideration when students of food and nutrition conclude that the world's production and consumption of food is below par.

Freer trade and an expanding economy for the deficient nations is part of the answer. Then there is need of more technical know-how and capital to improve conditions which invite shortage. Necessary too, is better knowledge of nutritional principles. To provide at least the know-how and the nutritional information, while making recommendations on the other points, the Food and Agricultural Organization was created.

Last September, at the Copenhagen Conference of the FAO, two broad objectives stood out as acceptable to everybody. The areas of agreement are worth recalling, since opinion was not so unanimous as to programs whereby desired food goals might be attained. The delegates agreed that the FAO has its main task cut out for it in making recommendations on

developing and organizing production, distribution, and utilization of basic foods to provide diets on a health standard for the people of all countries; stabilizing agricultural prices at levels fair to producers and consumers alike.

Before going to Copenhagen, Sir John Boyd Orr, Director-General of FAO, had proposed a program for attaining these goals. His World Food Board, with its wide powers of buying and selling to maintain markets and care for deficit countries, did not find favor. The power such a board would possess was a deterrent, but even more so was the cost of setting it in motion.

The Preparatory Commission on World Food Proposals was the logical consequence of the Copenhagen disagreement as to methods. The Preparatory Commission met in Washington on October 28 and carried on its work until January 24, when a report was finally issued. Delegates from seventeen nations actively participated. In addition, sixteen other governments sent ob-

servers and four intergovernmental organizations were represented.

In one sense the report is disappointing. The World Food Council it proposes is more a body for research and study than for practical action. In urging that related United Nations bodies, either existing or proposed, swing into action, it gives some hope. Its assertion that an expanding world economy is essential to solution of the food problem should be taken as a serious warning that economic isolationism is doomed. The misery of the world's poor can effectively destroy the prosperity of the more fortunate. To prevent a repetition, on a far more serious scale, of what happened in the 'twenties effective steps must be taken—now. In the years ahead food is the key to the world's economic security. And on that peace depends.

The recommendations of FAO, even though they result in prompt action, are but a part of what needs to be done. They are directed at long-term results rather than immediate relief of the world's undernourished. To help build bodies, as a work of both charity and reconstruction, continued relief on a large scale will be needed.

To further the immediate work of relief—the logical complement to FAO's long-range program—fund-raising campaigns are again under way, or will be shortly. The Bishops of the United States, through the Administrative Board of NCWC, have set a minimum of \$5,000,000 as the goal for the Laetare week relief drive. Catholics, in view of their numbers, should find this rather easy to achieve and surpass. For the sake of the world's hungry who still need help, and to prove the sincerity of their interest in raising the world's living standards, we hope they will meet and surpass the goal.

## *Month of the Catholic press*

Officially designated "Catholic Press Month," the thirty days following the feast of St. Francis de Sales, which occurs on January 29, are dedicated to the ideals, the accomplishments and the extension of the Catholic press. In his message for this year's observance, Archbishop John Gregory Murray of St. Paul, Episcopal Chairman of the NCWC Press Department, recalls the assembly of a thousand Catholic journalists before Pope Leo XIII on February 22, 1879, and his challenge to them to equal the achievements of the secular press in variety of news and elegance of presentation, but to surpass it in the superiority of their service,

above all in the communication of truth which the soul of man by its very nature desires to know and of which the power, the elevation and the beauty are such that from the moment that it becomes evident it wins automatically the agreement of those who were previously adversaries.

It is evident that Pope Leo's challenge has lost none of its compelling force.

Indeed the necessity for a vigorous and well-edited Catholic press grows greater each year. As Father Felix Morlion, O.P. has pointed out, the real danger for religion is to be found in the popular movements which increasingly attempt to shut off religion from life and to isolate Christianity in the churches, claiming secular monopolies in education and propaganda.

The specific idea which undermines Christian faith in our country is the idea that it is most comfortable to have no set ideas regarding religion. The secularized enemy of our times has no arguments, no syllogisms; he gives the latest news, the most interesting story, but by an unobtrusive system of choice and omission, of slant and implication, he instills in the masses his own contempt for religious realities.

Even our Catholic people—Catholically educated perhaps—are thrown into a thoroughly de-Christianized environment, social, industrial, intellectual. Often the Catholic press is their chief reminder of the philosophy and spiritual issues underlying current movements and events.

But the Catholic press does more than counteract a secularized view of questions of the day. It publicly defends and safeguards the rights and liberties of Catholics and of the Church; outside of the pulpit, it is the most important and effective school of the people; it carries the words of the Holy Father to the Universal Church; it provides complete and accurate information on Catholic questions, the work of Catholic organizations and associations and the many phases of Catholic Action.

"Catholic Press Month" is a challenge to the Catholic press to ply its apostolic trade zealously and well. It is likewise a challenge to the Catholic people to give it their intelligent interest and unstinted support.

## UMT, 1947 edition

In its latest pamphlet release, dated January, 1947, the War Department enumerates its 1947 demands for universal military training. All boys, whether physically fit or not, are to take a year of military training at the age of 18, spending six months in military camps and an equivalent of six months in other types of training—either three years in a National Guard unit, four years in college R.O.T.C. or in a military academy, enlistment in the Regular Armed Forces or study in an approved technical school. Secretary of War Patterson and Army personnel are briskly campaigning for congressional consideration of this plan now.

AMERICA has repeatedly stated its position on UMT. It believes in every appropriate and necessary measure for safeguarding our national security. Convinced that the only key to lasting peace is world disarmament, it none the less is persuaded that, until world disarmament becomes a reality, the nation must maintain a sound and adequate program of military defense. It finds itself in disagreement with the War Department on the question

of universal military training, which it considers neither necessary to a sound defense program nor financially feasible. War Department arguments that sound national defense is impossible without UMT have seemed to lack solid foundation.

And now, in reducing its original demands from a year to six months of straight military training, the War Department has not merely compromised, it has given away the fact that military indoctrination of the youth of the country is the more basic reason for wanting UMT. The Junior R.O.T.C. Manual (1945) is enlightening:

The presence in all professional groups of an increasing per cent of leaders who have enjoyed the benefits of military instruction serves as a stabilizing influence over the whole nation which supports and champions a sympathetic understanding of the needs of the military establishment and its purpose.

But the 1947 edition of UMT is objectionable on other counts as well. Its results in terms of national defense would not justify its costliness. The equivalents of the second six months of training would more seriously upset education than the original plan of a full year, would tend to militarize higher education and would unduly favor the relatively few R.O.T.C. colleges.

## "Survey Graphic" on Segregation

In its twelfth "Calling America" number (January, 1947) the *Survey Graphic* presents a study of this endemic American source of trouble. Twenty-six contributors who cover every phase of segregation—in education, in health, in labor-unions, in housing, in the armed services, etc.—make it a noteworthy contribution to the study of race relations. All who are interested in knowing the effects of segregation on American life, both in Negro and white communities, or in doing anything constructive about it, should read this issue of *Survey Graphic*.

Though it is widely defended as a "solution" of the race problem, the bankruptcy of segregation as a social technique has long been clear to those who are not socially simple-minded or obstinately impervious to evidence. It is condemned by competent sociologists as fomenting rather than allaying race tensions; it is condemned by moralists as an affront to human dignity and an attack on human rights. While upheld in theory by the courts as providing "separate and equal" treatment to both races, the "equality," as *Survey Graphic* amply makes clear, is flagrantly denied in practice.

In the first article of the survey, "Pattern of a Failure," Thomas Sancton points out what may well be the most grievous harm that segregation has done to the American people. Over and above the injustices perpetrated on the Negro in housing, education, social services and all the other necessities and amenities of life, there is the moral corrosion of the dominant majority:

It has made us too expert at both subterfuge and self-deception—we who began as a people characterized by simplicity, enthusiasm and a genuine belief in individual dignity . . . it has brought an



element of narrowness and rigidity into the character of the individual. It has diminished our interest in others and our ability to appreciate the inexhaustible riches of the human spirit. In teaching ourselves the method of systematically ruling out millions of men and women from normal contacts and appreciations, we have inadvertently taught ourselves to under-value life in general.

Anyone who has come into contact with race prejudice, even in its mildest form of passive acceptance of current American race mythology, will realize how true that is.

Catholics will study with interest the articles by Father John LaFarge and Liston Pope, of the Yale Divinity School, on "Caste in the Church." There is no room here for any smugness on our part; if Mr. Pope admits that Protestant practice has fallen short of Protestant teaching, we must, in all fairness, make the same confession. The white Catholic priest in those churches where segregation still obtains cannot but find it embarrassing to preach the doctrine of the Mystical Body.

What emerges from the *Survey Graphic* study is that it is the defenders of segregation and not its opponents who have the lost cause. However sincerely advocated by many of its proponents, it is a system that inevitably panders to the lower human instincts and serves as a cloak for selfishness, greed, pride and injustice. It stifles honest thought, corrodes democracy, puts Rankins in the House and Bilboes in the Senate. Such an anachronism cannot survive in today's world, where the question of human freedom is so sharply to the fore.

## Labor Laws

In its annual report to Congress, submitted on January 26, the National Labor Relations Board asserted that during its eleven-year history it "had served the public well." Apparently this statement was a little too much for some of our newspapers to swallow, and at least one editor interrupted the news story to insert, in brackets, statistics showing that, during the first eleven months of 1946, 107,475,000 man days of work were lost through strikes, and that this figure was far in excess of the pre-war record, which was 28,424,000 man days in 1937. Presumably the reader was supposed to conclude that the NLRB report was not to be taken seriously.

In this whole question of labor legislation it is important to understand that, despite the wave of strikes since the end of the war, the claim of the NLRB, that it has served the public well, is true. Should this point be missed, it is inevitable that the Congress will bungle the job it seems determined to do, and that any legislation it passes will almost certainly fail to stop industrial strife, or even to diminish it.

The immediate purpose of the National Labor Relations Act was to reduce industrial strife resulting from the refusal of employers to permit their workers the right of free association. If the legal protection afforded this right by the Wagner Act has reduced strikes over union recognition, together with the bitterness and violence that frequently accompanied organizing campaigns, then obviously the NLRB, in administering the Act, has

served the public well. It has accomplished the chief purpose intended by Congress in the Wagner Act.

The evidence on this point is clear: the Wagner Act has notably diminished the number of strikes growing out of the unwillingness of employers to recognize unions. During the great strike wave of 1937, seventy-six per cent of all strikes were called to gain union recognition. In 1945 the percentage of organization strikes had fallen to 29 per cent; and it is virtually certain that the percentage would have been smaller still if an anti-labor Congress had not denied the NLRB sufficient funds to carry out its duties under the Wagner Act. Many of the strikes occurred because the Board lacked the personnel to handle promptly the petitions for elections and charges of unfair labor practices filed by the unions.

The strikes since V-J Day do not argue, then, a failure to achieve the primary purpose of the Wagner Act. They argue, rather, a failure to attain its larger hope—the realization of industrial peace through collective bargaining. Why, during the past year, did collective bargaining fail in so many important cases? This is the question which ought to concern the Congress; it is the key to a real understanding of the problem.

A good example of the failure to see this is the current popularity of the thesis that the Wagner Act has given the workers too much power vis-a-vis their employers, and that to have industrial peace the pendulum must be permitted to swing back to the middle. In view of what happened last year, this can only mean that the unions must be weakened and the employers strengthened so that, in the event negotiations fail, the unions will be unable to strike with any hope of success, or, if they do call a strike, the employers will be more able than they now are to break it. In other words, the great strikes were called last year, and they lasted so long, not because labor was stronger than management, but because the protagonists were evenly matched.

But this was one of the purposes of the Wagner Act—to equalize bargaining power between workers and employers, so that the former would have a fair chance of obtaining their just demands and putting an end to exploitation. It was thought that this would remove some of the causes of industrial unrest, and that labor and management would have the good sense to make collective bargaining work. Proposals, therefore, to destroy the equality which, in some, but not all cases, the workers have achieved with employers are tantamount to an admission that collective bargaining is not the way to industrial peace. Before this Marxist conclusion is accepted, Congress ought to take a good, long look at all the facts. It should remember, as Senator James E. Murray, of Montana, told the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare on January 23, "the danger of seeking a short-term victory through compulsory techniques and losing the long-term objectives of the preservation of freedom and democracy." We agree with the Senator, and with President Truman, that Congress should sponsor a thorough study of industrial relations and refrain from major changes in the Wagner Act until the results of such a study are known.



# Sinarchism today

**James A. Magner**

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In her novel, *The Peacock Sheds His Tail*, which has become a sort of traveling companion for many tourists to Mexico, Alice Tisdale Hobart calls up the Sinarchists of that country for a special roasting. They are represented as a military, fanatical group, a sort of Mexican Ku Klux Klan, strenuously opposing the education of the Indian masses and blindly leading their adherents "against Protestantism, against democracy." Their slogans are alleged to be: "The Old Mexico restored. Church and State one. Landowners holding the power and riches. Union with Spain." It is indeed unfortunate that Americans should be given so raw and unfair a picture of the Sinarchist movement, or of the nature of the reaction which it represents.

It is something over a year ago since I wrote on this subject for AMERICA ("Sinarchism—Mexican Threat or Promise?" November 24, 1945), and the time now appears ripe for an evaluation of significant changes that have taken place in this organization in the meantime. Sinarchism no longer presents a single front. Like so many other movements of national and religious expression in Mexico, it has fallen victim to the forces of exasperation and become divided into two camps. As a result, there are today two groups, each calling itself the *Union Nacional Sinarquista* and referring to the other as a dissident body which cannot long endure.

There can be no doubt that the movement which began on May 23, 1937 and counted as its first martyr José Antonio Urquiza—the young enthusiast who fell a victim of communist bullets in Querétaro—was a social, not a political development. According to Urquiza,

We do not seek to form an electoral party, an expression which conveys the idea of division. We wish to attract men of all parties, to join them in those things which bring us all together and unite us, over and above those which divide us. For this reason, we reject from now on the characterization of politics which is imputed to Sinarchism. We are not a party and much less a political party. In the name *Union*, we find our right designation. Let us fight to secure the unity of Mexico, as the font and condition of all the welfare of the country.

In the first stage of its career, Sinarchism carried on a remarkable campaign, through large mass meetings of peasants, particularly in the states of Querétaro, Guanajuato, Nuevo Leon and Michoacan, with impassioned speeches and an appeal for the restoration of a Christian social order in Mexico through peaceful and disciplined idealism.

Despite the fact that ninety per cent of the Mexican people are baptized and profess the Christian faith, the Sinarchist leaders recognized that a large number of them possessed only a superficial knowledge of Christian doctrine and comparatively few practised their religion in proper form. Blaming the forces of liberalism and

communism for creating false objectives, they set out to revive the spirit of Christian tradition and morality, which the Revolution had panicked, and to formulate the principles of this reconstruction.

These principles have been summarized in sixteen basic points, calculated to set forth a new Christian social structure and to develop a national unity and confidence. "We consider criminal and cowardly," this manifesto states, "the defeatism of those who believe the resurgence of the country impossible or who look for the salvation of Mexico from foreign sources." Likewise condemned is the "communist tendency which endeavors to melt all nations into a single universal republic." Contrary to the statement of Mrs. Hobart, already quoted about union with Spain, the Sinarchists maintain, "We shall support our unchangeable nationalist position and we shall defend the independence of Mexico." Symbols alien to Mexican nationality are rejected. "Neither the crooked cross of nazism nor the red star of the Communists" has any place here. "Mexico has its own symbol, and he who does not defend it is a traitor." Likewise branded as unpatriotic and tendentious are those classifications which divide Mexicans into "leftists," "rightists," "revolutionaries" and "reactionaries." According to Sinarchism, there must be a permanent union of all, with only one division: Mexicans and anti-Mexicans.

Of special significance is the affirmation of Sinarchism on the right of private property, with a demand for the creation of social conditions which make it possible for all workers to secure their own property. Confronted with the communist cry, "All proletarians," the Sinarchist movement advances its own, namely, "All property owners."

Vigorous protest is made against the injustice of social conditions in which most of the people live in miserable huts and a few dwell in palaces. "We consider that the trouble is not with private ownership," say the Sinarchists, "but with the fact that only a few enjoy and abuse it, while the majority lack the requisites for livelihood." This statement comes perilously close to the truth in Mexico today, after more than three decades of revolutionary promises. Mexico has abundant sources of production, but what is required is a more equitable distribution of natural resources.

Confronted with this situation, where the rich become richer and the poor become poorer, the Sinarchists demand an absolute respect for the product of labor as well as tangible guarantees for capital which has been justly accumulated. They believe that capital should be adjusted to the needs of the Mexican commonweal and be made subject to the limitations required by the national good.

Towards these ends, they condemn vigorously the so-called "struggle of the classes," which under the impulse

of socialism and communism has crippled the economy of the nation. Moreover, they decry the exploitation of one social class by another. They propose instead a close collaboration of both capital and labor in a program of social justice to raise the standard of living.

As a movement of national character, Sinarchism puts among its sixteen points its aspiration for a free Mexico, emancipated from foreign tutelage as well as from internal tyranny. This has led some observers to regard the movement as a threat to friendly cooperation with the United States. Despite anti-American sentiments of a certain sector of the movement—which, incidentally, are shared to a degree by almost all Mexicans—this fact cannot be sustained as a valid argument against the organization as such. On the contrary, in a statement made to this writer by Carlos Athié, head of the group which still maintains its abstinence from political action, "Our Christian principles lead us to maintain an attitude of sincere fraternity towards the United States and other countries, especially towards our Catholic brethren of the entire continent, without in any way compromising the independence and liberty of our country."

Relative to the state, Sinarchism is on record as opposed to the idea that a government should serve simply as the guardian of vested interests and abstain from social legislation. On the other hand, it condemns the tyranny of government which intervenes in all activities, "absorbs individual activity, enslaves wills and kills all private initiative." Taken at least at its face value, the manifesto of Sinarchism (whose very name indicates a society "with order," as opposed to unleashed power and anarchy) may well be taken as a sound statement of Christian principles in the social, economic and political orders.

Having established its principles, Sinarchism has entered its second stage with a program of civic and social action. Along civic lines, it has proposed the protection of individual, family and social rights. More specifically, these have been listed as freedom of religion, education, assembly, speech, work and the free exercise of the right of private property within the limits of the common good.

It has extended its activity to work for the protection of life and individual possessions, and the development of public morality, personal hygiene and better housing conditions, formation of Christian character, with a campaign against wholesale vice which has developed in Mexico within the past three decades. In social action, it has concentrated upon means of increasing agricultural production, through practical instruction as well as agrarian associations and unions for financial credit.

Unfortunately, this program has not been sufficiently rapid and tangible in fruits to satisfy the more aggressive and militant elements of the movement. The latter groups have felt that little or no progress is being achieved in reformation of the agrarian laws, which are a basic concern in a nation whose principal source of livelihood is agriculture. With internal conflict imminent, but hoping for success, some of the more conservative leaders directly placed the question before President

Avila Camacho. He refused to take action; and the way was opened for schism.

It is now two years since the rift began. When the failure of non-political Sinarchism to obtain the revision of agrarian laws became apparent, it was suggested to the Sinarchist chief, Miguel Torres Bueno, that the movement convert itself into a political group and endeavor through electoral action to work its way into Congress. Gradually the idea took hold through underground activity, from which there has emerged a new group, *Fuerza Popular*—Popular Force.

As a result of this development, Sinarchism, which numbered some 500,000 adherents, has been split into two more or less equal groups. Thus an anomalous situation has arisen, with two national bodies, each claiming the name of *Union Nacional Sinarquista*, each with its own organization and each disavowing the other. Headed by Gildardo González Sánchez, the political group, of which Torres Bueno is now in charge of the propaganda section, threw itself vigorously into the recent political campaign, in some cases joining hands with the forces of the *Acción Nacional* Party.

The paper of the political group, *Orden* ("Order"), maintains that the creation of democracy in Mexico can come only through the vigorous political action of its members and regards the other, non-political, group of Sinarchists as ineffective and doomed to extinction. The latter issues its own publication, which at the time of this article had not yet regained its mailing privileges, under the original name *El Sinarquista*. According to this group, the political Sinarchists have broken faith with the principles of the foundation as expressed by Urquiza. The objective of this branch continues to be that of civic action in the defense of civil liberties and the formation of Christian leaders, with social action in the organization of agricultural, technical and financial aids for its members.

As a result of its activities during the 1945-46 period, the non-political group established 188 schools, in addition to 210 centers for teaching adults to read and write, 132 study circles with an average attendance of 100 persons each, 6 public libraries and 10 portable libraries. Notable work has also been carried on in hygienic and family welfare and against such vices as alcoholism and marihuana smoking. During this period, 236 regional meetings have been held and four national conventions of the heads of the movement. The leaders are aware of the need of a solid Christian preparation of the people and have concentrated upon this formation as their hope for the future of the organization.

Meanwhile the importance of the political faction and of *Fuerza Popular*, which has been violently denounced by communist-inspired organs and groups, is not to be minimized. In the national elections this sector succeeded in placing only one of its candidates, Manuel Rocha, in Congress. This gain, however, is not to be underestimated; it represents at least a recognition of the party by the Nationalist Revolutionary Party, which holds the reins of government and now considers itself an "institution."



What the future of Sinarchism, thus divided, will be is difficult to forecast at this time. If political Sinarchism can maintain its integrity, and non-political Sinarchism can continue its work of preparing leaders among the people in Christian principles, the reunion of the two groups may result in a body of action that will play a decisive role in the future of Mexico. If, however, the schism continues indefinitely, the whole movement may become diluted and the more "practical" political elements will be drawn under the wings of the official revolutionary party, with the resultant disappearance from national life of an effective and independent popular Christian force.

## *Needed: more homes*

*William J. Gibbons*

Housing as a major problem of national importance is once again being forced upon the attention of Congress. The United States Conference of Mayors, in its recent three-day meeting in Washington, chose housing as the chief topic of discussion for one of the days. The mayors were worried, which is not to be wondered at in view of the fact that the 700,000 housing units completed in 1946 under the emergency housing program did no more than put a dent in the over-all shortage.

Two addresses attracted particular attention, for they quickly got to the heart of the problem. They were by Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio and Mayor William O'Dwyer of New York City. The address of the Mayor, read in his absence by Edmond B. Butler, chairman of the New York Housing Authority, gave a gloomy picture of the housing problem as viewed by those who bear the responsibility of seeing that local needs are met.

In the Mayor's words, municipal officials "have had enough explanations, excuses and historical reasons for the crisis." What they want is effective, comprehensive action, before the health and family life of our citizens is permanently impaired.

It avails us little to blame the war; the low rate of construction before the war; the lack of proper planning to avoid deterioration and decay of entire neighborhoods; the low incomes of families which fail to attract profitable building enterprises; the difficulties in the building industry; or a dozen other things. What matters is that there is a job to be done now.

To show how serious is the shortage confronting the nation, the Mayor gave the essential facts on the New York City housing situation. The figures are unique only in their magnitude; they have parallels in almost every community throughout the country, and for that matter around the world.

The City of New York (all boroughs) has an absolute housing shortage of 150,000 dwelling units. Since most families in the city do not live in individual homes, this means, practically speaking, a deficit of that number of apartments. Half a million persons are therefore living under unsatisfactory conditions, "with children in board-

ing houses without cooking facilities; doubled-up and crowded in with other families, and even scattered so that mother and children reside in one place and the father in another."

Yet that is but part of the picture. There are, besides, 600,000 families (approximately two million people) living in slums and obsolete buildings. A total, therefore, of 750,000 new dwellings is needed just to provide room for homeless families and to meet minimum replacement requirements. Those who follow New York news do not need to be told by the Mayor what the consequences of such conditions can be. They are evident from the disastrous fires which take their toll of lives and the collapse of buildings which should long since have been condemned as dwellings. The moral loss has not yet been estimated.

Mayor O'Dwyer pointed out one fact which should be pondered by those who think that more incentive to private enterprise will of itself solve the problem. Of the 750,000 dwelling units required in New York City, private enterprise will be able to supply only 80 to 85 per cent. To do this a considerable amount of municipal assistance will be needed in the form of condemnation proceedings, closing of streets, replanning of neighborhoods and some tax exemptions. The remainder of the home-seeking families, representing the lowest income group, cannot possibly meet the prices which private builders would have to ask for even very modest dwellings. This means that the municipal government, aided by State and Federal funds, must assume responsibility for approximately 200,000 of the needed dwelling units, hoping that the other 550,000 will be taken care of by private enterprise at not too high a cost to the home-seeker.

The implications of these figures in terms of a concrete construction program can be grasped only when one realizes that in the first decade of public housing in New York City apartments were provided for approximately 17,000 low-income families, or about 60,000 people. Even this limited amount of construction would have been impossible without aid from the Federal Government under the United States Housing Act of 1937.

Increase in construction costs during and since the war has placed cities like New York in a most difficult position. In 1939, for example, plans were laid for an elaborate low-cost housing program. The State legislature appropriated \$300 million for municipal housing projects, \$240 million of which went to the City. Costs mounted so rapidly that \$125 million has so far been spent or obligated. The remainder is already earmarked for completing projects under construction or in the site-clearance stage. The amount of construction which would have been possible in 1939 is now practically halved.

The City itself, independently of State and Federal aid, has guaranteed bonds of the Housing Authority to an extent sufficient to make possible five projects for 2,633 families. Yet all these projects taken together, since the beginning of public housing, have provided for less than 40,000 families, but a fraction of the 200,000 who stand in need of low-cost housing assistance. This in no



way takes into account the other half-million families who need new and decent living quarters but are theoretically able to pay the prices private construction will entail. Yet the housing program of New York City is considered progressive compared with programs of other cities throughout the nation.

On the same program as Mayor O'Dwyer, Senator Taft also spoke on the plight of the lowest twenty per cent of our population, which stands in need of public housing. The Senator, it will be remembered, was one of the sponsors of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft General Housing Bill, which got stalled in the last Congress, much to the delight of certain elements in the home construction and finance business. Despite that temporary defeat, Senator Taft has not changed his position. He still believes that only government-sponsored housing, such as is envisioned in the General Housing bill, can help the twenty per cent of the people lowest in the economic scale.

Like many others, the Senator is convinced that public housing should be held to the minimum. Yet he recognizes that all the protestations in the world will never change the fact that in the past private enterprise has never provided satisfactorily for the most needy group. At best it has resorted to a hand-me-down theory of housing—called by the veterans “trickle down”—which takes it for granted that low-income families must live in dilapidated dwellings because they cannot afford to pay current prices for better quarters. In what amounted to an indirect rebuff to those individualistic builders who attack public housing as fascism, Senator Taft made it clear that he himself, and the American people generally, do not subscribe to the economic philosophy of “devil take the hindmost.”

One point brought out by Senator Taft in his address is well worth noting, for it coincides closely with conclusions drawn by Mayor O'Dwyer from his study of the New York City situation. The legislation adopted or proposed to date, including the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill of the last Congress, has not yet taken into consideration the real magnitude of the problem. The shelved bill, for example, proposed grants to low-cost housing projects sufficient for only 125,000 units a year for four years. This, says the Senator, is only about one-tenth of the actual need which exists at present.

Estimates vary as to the number of dwelling units which the country requires. No one knows exactly, for no one has made an accurate study of the conditions of our houses. The data we have to go on, drawn from census reports as to presence or absence of facilities and age of the house, lead to rather pessimistic conclusions. Be that as it may, Senator Taft ventured the estimate that within the next ten years we should have at least 6,000,000 new homes for families formed during the war years and 6,000,000 more to replace slums and substandard dwellings.

Evidently such a shortage of decent dwellings means construction of 1,200,000 units a year if we are ever to catch up. This is more than the present capacity of the industry, judging from past performance. Moreover, the volume of materials it implies poses a nice problem as

to conservation of natural resources, particularly lumber.

To provide suitably for all classes of citizens, government-sponsored housing must be vastly increased. Not that anyone wants to take the job away from private industry, but under present costs and without reforms in taxation and building codes, in construction techniques, craft unions and building circles, no other solution is possible.

Even with the needed reforms in the building industry, under our present economic structure genuinely low-cost housing would not be possible without some form of direct or indirect subsidy. The economically lowest fifth of our people simply do not have the money to translate their very real need into effective demand. Without the demand either price or supply, or both, will fall. In the field of home construction, as soon as demand falls off, it is the volume of construction, rather than the price, which has traditionally been contracted.

Only when the builders have an answer to that problem, and have learned to cut costs drastically, will there be any solid ground for objecting to that amount of public housing which the general welfare demands.

In cutting costs the building trades must assist. Too often in the past they have succeeded in adding to costs without in any way increasing output. They may argue that under the jungle law of economics they had to protect themselves. But now it is quite evident from the acute shortage of skilled workers and the existence of unreasonably restrictive work rules that all the individualism is not on the side of the contractors and finance groups.

But increased grants for government-sponsored housing projects are only part of the national housing program which Congress will have to legislate if we are ever to get out of the mess. There is need for government-sponsored research into new methods of construction at lower costs and into ways of conserving our diminishing resources, especially lumber. One Title (II) of the old Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill would have provided for such research. The need still exists, but without new legislation it cannot be satisfied.

In view of the urgent need of rental housing for moderate income groups, a “yield insurance” system to encourage investment in such projects is just as desirable now as when envisioned in the original General Housing bill. Needed too is wide expansion of mortgage insurance, as was proposed in Title IV of that same bill. Any national legislation on the subject of housing will also have to take into account the desirability of expanding the lending powers of Federal home-loan banks and of federally chartered savings and loan associations. Such an expansion could assist private enterprise in its efforts to satisfy the needs of the moderate income group.

A national program on housing cannot be delayed any longer. The temporary emergency program, so loudly demanded a year ago by opponents of a permanent program, has not measured up to expectations. Much of the temporary housing merely ate up funds and materials which could have more profitably gone into

permanent dwellings. Under price restrictions and in view of cost instability, construction of rental housing, greatly in demand, has languished. The solution is not scuttling of rent controls, but some sort of encouragement in the form of a direct or indirect subsidy until the situation clears up by supply more nearly approximating demand. This a permanent housing program could provide.

The President's new program, which replaced that of Mr. Wyatt, is long on promises but without any substantial means of implementation. The mere retention of a few controls, on rent and materials and on floor space, is only a negative measure to prevent complete anarchy. Something more constructive is needed, quickly.

## *That parish at West Point*

*Robert A. Graham*

There is some truth in the statement that the Military Academy at West Point suffers from an overdose of good publicity. Invincible football teams and those weekly dress parades that are a cameraman's dream have all but buried the normal activities of the institution and created a distorted picture of the life and problems of the cadets. If you ask Monsignor George G. Murdock, pastor at West Point since 1932, Catholics, too, have their own share of misinformation, particularly on the position of Catholic young men who are undergoing the rigorous training up there at the bend of the Hudson.

It shouldn't be that way. The Catholic score at West Point is not a matter of indifference. In these post-war years, when all the signs point to an increased role to be played in our national life by the military, sheer self-interest compels a periodic review of our attitude towards the source from which most of our military leadership comes. Practical Catholics in the ranks of the professional soldiers are a necessity, given the great capacity for good and ill that such officers possess in peace as well as in war. Then, too, parents, pastors and principals frequently find themselves faced with the question whether to advise young men to seek or to accept an appointment to the Academy and the military career this leads to. West Point, like its sister school at Annapolis (cf. "Catholicism and the U. S. Naval Academy," *AMERICA*, Dec. 8, 1945), is a national institution, and it has significance for Catholics as much as for anyone else.

Numerically, Catholics seem to be holding their own. At mid-term there were approximately 2,050 cadets undergoing training to be officers of the Regular Army. Of this number 440 were members of the Catholic Squad, or roughly one-fifth of the total roster of cadets. This figure is near the commonly accepted national average of Catholics. In the present plebe class that entered last summer there are 187 Catholics out of 800. This is a percentage slightly higher than the average for the four

years together. In addition to the 440 cadets, there are an additional thousand souls for whom the parish is responsible. These consist of the officers and enlisted personnel, with their families, as well as the civilian employees living on the post.

The student body of the Academy is a real cross-section of the nation. This is true of the Catholic Squad as well. Young men from almost every State, and from every racial, social and educational background, are to be found kneeling in their grey dress uniforms each Sunday in Holy Trinity Chapel. About one-fourth are from families in which one parent is not a Catholic.

Criticisms of the type of training given at West Point have never been wanting. Those concerned challenge most of the allegations as exaggerated and in any case based on an unjust conception of what West Point is supposed to be. But the correctness of some of these strictures has been admitted implicitly by the officials themselves, who in recent years have introduced what for West Point are radical innovations. For instance, cadets are now allowed to have spending money. First classmen may spend the week-ends off the reservation. The incessant inspections are more informal, even if still rigorous. The curriculum, too, has been broadened to include less technical subjects. But the motif of military training remains the same. No one should in fairness expect it to be otherwise.

It is not surprising that some of these criticisms have a bearing on the religious and moral influences, or the lack of them, at the Academy. For his part, Monsignor Murdock, who with his assistant, Father Joseph P. Moore, has won the affection of the cadets and the respect of the authorities, asserts emphatically, "Any lad of normal sound Catholic background has nothing to fear for his faith from his four years at West Point." From the viewpoint of facilities for receiving the sacraments and contact with their confessors and spiritual guides, this statement can easily be backed up. Two zealous and experienced priests devote their full time chiefly to the needs of the 440 cadets. The chapel and parish residence are within a few steps of the cadet barracks. Official regulations of the Academy pave the way for easy access to confession on Saturday afternoons and evenings, and for Holy Communion on Sundays and Holy Days. Sunday Mass is of regulation. But the spontaneous piety of the Catholic Squad can be measured during the week-days. Outside of Lent about fifty attend the week-day masses, of whom half receive Holy Communion. And this means foregoing their breakfast for that morning. In Lent the numbers treble. This is a significant record for any school.

The Commanding General and the military authorities have given their official and traditional endorsement to the work of the pastor, and cooperate in the mechanical means to carry on his religious program. For instance, through such cooperation the choirs (two of them) are able to prepare for liturgical events both in the Chapel and in New York City churches. The Acolyte Squad gets similar extra opportunity to do its work as mass servers and leaders at the dialogue masses. The officials also



sanction the annual benefit ball staged in New York on the night of one of the chief Army football games. As the pastor is not supported by the Government, this outstanding social event is an important and indispensable means to carry on his work. And each year loyal friends and graduates of the Academy rally to his help at this time.

If you ask any Catholic cadet he will assure you that he feels no sense of inferiority or isolation from the rest of the Corps of Cadets by reason of his being in that marked body, the Catholic Squad. And it is with some amusement that Monsignor Murdock occasionally receives letters from anxious mothers of prospective plebes who object to their son's accepting an appointment. He often worries about one or other of his charges, but least of all over those whose own parents show such solicitude.

Providing facilities for frequenting the sacraments is not the chief problem of the pastor. West Point is a school for the training of future officers of the United States Regular Army. The parishioners, or the greater part of them, are young men, often mere boys, who have chosen a very specialized career that calls for its own qualities of character. There are moral and spiritual hazards in the professional military life, for which adequate defenses must be built up in the minds and hearts of the cadets. It is almost like a race of moral training against military training.

The chief hazards in the development of an officer fully alive to his duties and ideals as a Catholic are those inherent in the military profession itself. A sheer formalism and materialism verging on the pagan are part and parcel of military thinking. Nothing matters but efficiency and compliance with formalities or regulations. Religion is an incidental that is tolerated as a useful adjunct to morale problems. The Army itself is an Absolute, a self-sustaining, self-contained entity that rolls along as an end in itself. In this great current it is all too easy to be caught up and carried along. It takes a continuing and conscious effort on the part of a Catholic to preserve himself from falling completely under the hypnotism of this "system." Religious exercises and obligations tend to take on a merely formal aspect. Even attendance at Holy Mass could be mentally associated with the routine activities of the day. It is the constant task of the priests at West Point to see that their charges recognize these influences and prepare themselves with the antidotes.

While such risks are considerable, they are in part compensated for by the fact that the cadet is not also subjected to other influences that work upon a student at a similar stage in other careers and in other institutions. The "materialism" or "paganism" of the military mind is insidious enough, but at least it is not a positive or dynamic philosophy actively incompatible with Catholic principles. At West Point the crowded schedule and innumerable formations make it difficult to arrange the extra-curricular activities that in other colleges supplement the work of the Chaplain. Yet there is much even in this routine training that helps to form or at least

serves as the foundation for spiritual character. Last June one of the graduating cadets took his degree, but thereupon resigned, with War Department authorization, in order to enter the Paulist Novitiate. It was a vocation that grew in the unsuspected fertility of that rocky point. In at least one case the so-called paganizing influence of a West Point training had failed to take effect.

The risks described and others that go hand in hand with the gypsy life led by army families are occupational hazards. A catalogue of similar pitfalls could be drawn up for almost any serious profession, such as medicine or law. When guides of youth are consulted, the first question to be asked or, better, supposed, is whether the boy wants to make a career of the Army. Manifestly, only a youth who is physically, mentally and psychologically fitted for the life can safely ride out the risks of such a career. Is he at least prepared to serve four years after his graduation, according to the oath he will take on his first day as a plebe? This is surely one of those personal decisions in which a priest or parent or principal or dean can play no more than a sideline role. Many of those who get into trouble as cadets or as a result of a mold of character received at West Point should never have gone there in the first place. And there are misfits each year. The present plebe class started with 915. In six months 173, or nearly twenty per cent, had been dropped or had resigned. Some of these came with inadequate academic abilities, some lacked the psychological make-up to survive the regime of discipline, some saw promptly that the life involved more than glamorous uniforms. The rest are going on with that unique training whose end-product is a West Pointer. It is the continuing task of the priests at Holy Trinity Parish of West Point to keep the religious training abreast of the military training.

Are Catholic schools supplying their quota of apt candidates in this key area of our national life? Not more than one-third, and probably less, of the 440 have had even a high-school education under Catholic auspices. Few have been to Catholic colleges. One reason for this is, of course, the fact that Catholic schools are not distributed according to congressional districts, from which the appointments come in large part. But even so, it is the belief that Catholic high schools or colleges are not performing their function of supplying Catholic leaders in every significant walk of life. Monsignor Murdock is of the opinion that principals and pastors are quite commonly uninformed or misinformed on the nature of life at West Point from the viewpoint of religious practice and moral training. It is no surprise that in consequence they do not call the attention of their young people to appointments open in their region, or positively discourage students or parents who approach them for advice.

In the opinion of Monsignor Murdock those in charge of young men should: 1) appreciate the importance of maintaining and improving Catholic representation at West Point and in the other service academies; 2) be informed on the religious conditions and safeguards at



West Point; 3) be informed of the procedures and obstacles involved in getting the necessary appointments; 4) encourage apt candidates who evince more than a transitory or frivolous interest in the future that West Point offers.

The June graduation is a beautiful event to watch. Part of the well-known color and beauty of this occasion are the marriages which keep the post Chaplain and the Catholic pastor extremely busy for a while. Last year there were thirteen marriages at graduation. In some of these the happy bride or groom was a recent convert. Five of these marriages were mixed marriages. But if history repeats itself, the non-Catholic party may very likely have already become a Catholic.

The opportunities offered the Catholic graduates of the Military Academy for real apostolic work are perhaps greater than in some other careers. One thinks particularly at this time of the wide scope of his assignments—in the Orient, in Europe and in other places where Catholic interests are at stake. By his personal example an officer carries a tremendous influence with weaker Catholics under his command. And if Army leadership in the recent war has shown too little awareness of the importance of religion and morality, that fact should be an argument for more genuinely Catholic officers, not for fewer. Far from granting that his mission at West Point is merely a rear-guard action, Monsignor Murdock says, "Send us only the highest type of Catholic lad and we will give the country the best Christian leadership so imperatively needed today!"

## What goes here?

*Benjamin L. Masse*

Like most of the human race the writer is fundamentally a simple person. That is, he is allergic to complexities. To complicated questions he likes simple, clean-cut, black-and-white answers. He wants to put things in pigeon-holes, all neatly and definitively marked.

While most of us have long since learned that life is an intricate business and that, more often than not, simple answers are likely to be wrong answers, we have a suspicion that sometimes, at least, due to the folly or greed or shortsightedness of men, problems become much more tangled than they really need be. If the reader will bear with me for a few minutes, I should like to illustrate this point with two examples from current controversies.

There is a great hue and cry right now over the question of industry-wide collective bargaining. The threatened rail and maritime strikes last year and John L. Lewis' strike in coal emphasized what everybody grants is a perilous situation. When organized labor and organized management, bargaining on an industry-wide basis, fail to reach an agreement, an industry-wide stoppage results, and there is the devil to pay. It is easy to understand how such a possibility can turn people against industry-wide bargaining. It is easy enough to understand, too, some of the other arguments against the

practice, namely, that industry-wide bargaining tends to the cartelization of business and that it jeopardizes small and medium firms which cannot pay the same wages as their big competitors.

If the discussion remained within these bounds, it would be difficult to come to some reasonable conclusion, but not impossible. Those who see the advantages of industry-wide bargaining could advance their contentions; the points would be debated; there would be, if not complete agreement, at least a consensus that could serve as the basis of national policy.

But what can a body do when one of the contestants starts playing both ends against the middle?

This question of industry-wide bargaining has become closely associated with another question—the question of monopoly. That is what is behind the argument that small and medium concerns cannot meet the going wage in an industry. If industry-wide bargaining is permitted, these firms will be forced to go out of business, and the disappearance of such firms, it is argued, will promote concentration in the industry and lead to monopoly.

This argument makes a deep impression on the American public, which has always been ready to rally round the cause of small business. But before a rebuttal can be made, showing that industry-wide collective bargaining and industry-wide wage rates are not synonymous, because industry-wide bargaining can allow for wage differentials, some government agency—in this case the Smaller War Plants Corporation—issues a study showing that during the war years the forces of monopoly in American industry were notably strengthened. This starts a new debate, and the friends of big business, who turn out to be pretty much the same people who are attacking industry-wide bargaining, begin looking to their defenses. And they come up with an editorial from the January 24 New York Times:

One of the more popular myths concerning the American war effort is that the only concerns to show substantial profits were a handful of the nation's industrial giants. Contributing no little to the maintenance of this belief have been some of the fanciful statistics produced by the economists of the Smaller War Plants Corporation and the even more fanciful deductions drawn therefrom. Typical of the latter was the recent pronouncement of this group that the sixty-three largest manufacturing corporations had accumulated working capital in the amount of \$10 billions, a sum which would enable them, if they so desired, to "purchase the assets of 71,700 smaller manufacturing enterprises."

And the *Times* goes on to expose this "myth" by quoting another government report, a study by Albert R. Koch and Eleanor J. Stockwell for the Federal Reserve Board, which shows that during the years 1940-45 small and middle-sized concerns enjoyed a "relative greater increase in sales, profits and assets" than the larger companies. And the *Times* concludes that "the growth in working capital by the end of the war was correspondingly greater among the small firms than among the large."

Well, now, where does this leave us? We were arguing about industry-wide bargaining, and we were being

told that industry-wide bargaining encourages monopoly because small and medium-size firms cannot pay the same wages as big concerns and remain in business; and then the question of monopoly came up in a different context, and now we are told that small and medium-sized firms earned relatively higher profits during the war than did the giant corporations, and salted away more working capital! Why, then, we wonder, momentarily dazed, can't they pay the going wage?

No doubt there is an answer to this seeming contradiction, but the reader will see what I mean when I protest, for sweet simplicity's sake, that some of the complicated issues of the day are being made more complicated than is necessary.

Or take another case, which will soon be making headlines, the so-called Bulwinkle bill.

The story goes back to 1944, when, following a two-year investigation authorized by the then Attorney General, Francis Biddle, the U. S. Department of Justice accused the Western Association of Railway Executives, the Association of American Railroads, J. P. Morgan and Co., Kuhn, Loeb and Co., and assorted railroad presidents and directors of violating the Sherman Anti-trust Act. Basis for the charge was the now famous "Western Agreement," dating back to 1932, by which the signatories agreed:

1. To impose upon shippers in the Western District freight rates which are higher than those fixed by defendants and their co-conspirators for comparable service to shippers in the Eastern District.
2. To deprive shippers of perishable products of competitive transportation rates and services by holding cars of perishables shipped from the Western District upon side or spur tracks in order to delay their delivery at eastern destinations.
3. To disconnect and place out of operation air-cooling equipment on cars coming from connecting railroads which had installed such equipment.
4. To prohibit the installation and provision of various recreational facilities, including motion pictures and radios, upon trains operated by defendant railroads.
5. To refrain from solicitation of certain types of low-rate passenger traffic.
6. To eliminate competition by restricting the individual railroad's right to advertise and to solicit business.

If nothing goes wrong, the Justice Department's suit is scheduled to be argued in April, in Federal Court at Lincoln, Nebraska. But something may go wrong, that something being the Bulwinkle bill. Introduced originally by Representative Alfred L. Bulwinkle, of North Carolina, during the 79th Congress—hence its name—this bill would largely exempt the railroads from the Sherman Anti-trust Act and, in the process, cut the ground from under the Government's suit. A favorably-disposed Senate Interstate Commerce Committee has been holding hearings on the bill and Congress is almost certain to pass it.

What is the public to think of all this? Here is a great question of national policy, a question which concerns practically everybody in the country, a question which is so important that upon the correct answer may

conceivably rest the future security of the Republic. (Without a sound transportation system a modern war cannot be fought and won.) What is the issue and what are the arguments?

The issue is this: competition vs. monopoly in rail transportation; and these are the arguments.

The "Western Agreement," much of which would become legal under the Bulwinkle bill, was a child of the depression and the financial plight of the railroads. Its purpose was to eliminate the "waste of competition," and this purpose has been defended by no less a public servant than Secretary of Commerce Harriman. In 1943, R. V. Fletcher, president of the Association of American Railroads, quoted Mr. Harriman on the "Western Agreement" as saying: "If there is a conspiracy, then the railroads of the country need bigger and better conspiracies." Railroad executives believe (which is to say, the banks and insurance companies which control rail transportation believe) that at the present time railroads can be run more efficiently under monopolistic than under competitive conditions.

But opponents of the Bulwinkle bill charge that it will put an end to competition in all transportation and create one of the most dangerous monopolies the country has ever seen. They are not mollified by claims that this monopolistic power will be surrounded by adequate safeguards, the chief ones being a requirement that rate agreements be submitted to the Interstate Commerce Commission, and extension of the Sherman Act's protection to any railroad which refuses to abide by the rates established. They have seen the railroad lobby in action in Washington, and, whether or not they agree with Senator Aiken that it is "even stronger than the power lobby," they know how enormous is its influence.

This is not a simple problem, any more than is the problem of industry-wide bargaining, though in outline it may seem easy enough. But maybe the railroads ought to be cartelized, despite their subjection to Wall Street. Maybe they can be run more efficiently that way. After all, the history of competition in the industry is not a promising story.

The point is that this difficult question has been made still more complicated by an extraneous circumstance. *The men who are behind the anti-trust case against the railroads, and the men who are fighting the Bulwinkle bill, are for the most part New Dealers. And the men on the other side, the men who want monopoly powers, are for the most part anti-New Dealers.* And so we have the baffling spectacle of men charged with being enemies of the American system of competitive enterprise defending competition on the railroads, and militant defenders of the system opposing competition. (Robert Young, head of the Allegheny Corporation and Chairman of the Board of the Chesapeake and Ohio, is an exception to all this; but why complicate the situation further?)

For my simple mind this is just too much and so, having done my duty to the reading public, I hereby wash my hands of the whole affair. But if you like complicated problems, keep a sharp eye on Congress for the next few weeks.



# Literature & Art

## Can Catholics read?

C. J. McGuire

Mr. McGuire, a Fordham graduate and now on leave in the U. S. Coast Guard Service from a teaching position in New York's schools, poses some embarrassing questions in this fighting article. We hope the shock-therapy is effective.

Next Sunday after Mass (and to be fair you must not choose the children's Mass), you should stop at random a large number of those emerging from the church and put a few pointed questions to them. The object of the examination would be to determine how many have read *Kristin Lavransdatter*, how many have read *Forever Amber*, and how many have read neither, nor understand at all what you are talking about. To be perfectly just, those specific titles need not be the ones used. Substitute *Diary of a Country Priest* for the Undset book, and *The Black Rose* for the other thing. The validity of the investigation would be the same in either case, and there would be little variation in the responses.

What would the survey prove? It might, because of the narrowness of its scope, prove nothing. But there are grounds for suspicion that a great truth might be revealed. Try to imagine what answers you would get.

A similar survey could be conducted by going on a still hunt in your local branch of the public library. Of course, no statistics are available, but an open eye will bring you to the point. In the library, what percentage of the users are from your parish church? And how frequent are they?

To eschew subtlety, let it be asked: how many of your Catholic neighbors are readers? If you were fortunate enough to attend a Catholic high school or college, how many of your classmates, as you meet them now, are readers? And if they are, what do they read?

These suspicions are shameful. For if the evidence of what we see, what we hear and what we read is at all trustworthy, there is a woeful illiteracy among our Catholic body. There are strong grounds for belief that real illiteracy is more widespread among Catholics than in any other organic group of Americans. In many ways this is apparently accidental; in several other ways it is highly characteristic.

The phenomenon of the real illiteracy of Catholics, and by real illiteracy is meant doubly the absence of wide reading plus the absence of intelligent reading, is one of the primary causes for the traditional low ebb of Catholic literature in America. It may be argued that the lack of a literature is the reason for the non-existence of the audience, but this is not true. There are abundant indications that this potential audience is illiterate and non-reading no matter what the fare offered them. They don't read Dante and they wouldn't if he lived now in Boston.

Some sort of comprehensive survey, undertaken on a broad base, has long been needed to determine the nature of the American Catholic as a reader. Lacking this, we are forced to a scattered summary of observations, inferences, questions and suggestions.

In many quarters the reading ability of Catholics is dismissed as a matter of no consequence, provided harmful books are denounced and a conventional bow made to certain publishers and pamphleteers. This is unfortunate. The influence of printed matter is pretty generally admitted to be a strong element in the shaping of mind and action. The mere gesture of denunciation and admonition in general terms is not sufficient to direct the energies that seek outlet and find new stimulus in reading. It is noteworthy that coincident with a disregard for what we may call the literary culture of the Catholic there appears to be a deep distrust of reading *per se*. The belief seems to be that wide reading in and of itself is subversive, suspicious and rarely to be sanctioned. Contest with any who are of this opinion must be indirect, if profitable at all.

The patent fact is that the intelligence level and the critical perceptions of Catholics with reference to printed matter are of real concern. It is an error to feel that reading is a diversion for eccentrics and experts. The general cultural status of Catholics, especially in the field of literature, is the prime consideration. Attention must be given to the present reading taste of Catholics, to the factors that have formed that taste, to the ends and means involved in reforming it. Now, beyond the fact that we do assume, possibly incorrectly, that Catholics as we know them are less inclined to the uses of literature than other groups, there is one immediate truth that cannot escape notice. *There is no positive, intelligent, and distinct Catholic reading public in the U. S.*

Only two steps are needed to verify this statement. One is examination of the weekly best-seller list as published in the *New York Times*. The other is examination of the catalogs of specifically Catholic publishers. To take, any week, the list of best-selling fiction for analysis, we find that the general taste of the nation prefers the gaudy and sensational, or the pretentious and meretricious. It is aside from our present consideration to elaborate on the gravely ephemeral quality of the best-seller. Enough is it to note that, using even the charitable five-year test for fiction worth reading, the best-seller of today is forgot tomorrow. But aside from the

unvarying makeup of this list, there is in it nowhere any evidence of a Catholic influence upon its contents.

When a Catholic writer achieves the dubious fame of the best-seller classification, it is because of his international reputation; it occurs in the case of an Evelyn Waugh or a Bruce Marshall. And these men are more widely known and read among non-Catholics than among their coreligionists. Aside from such cases as these, the best-seller list generally reflects those very trends which preachers, primarily interested in the *bonum*, denounce as sensational and immoral, or which sane critics, interested as a few of them are in the *pulchrum*, condemn as vulgar, sentimental and rapidly perishable. The direct inference from this is that Catholics, one-fifth of our population by number, we are told, and therefore quantitative enough to exert an appreciable effect on statistics, either do not read at all, or, if they do, are indistinguishable from the rest of the nation when money is spent on books. That is, the Catholic taste in reading, if it can be determined in any significant size, tends toward the sensational, the immoral, the vulgar, the sentimental, the ephemeral. For concrete instances, one can consult his acquaintances, or take the poll outside the church door.

Looking through the catalogs of publishers who are Catholic by trade, the observer first notes the scarcity of worthwhile fiction. This might indicate how long in esteem is the novel directed toward the Catholic audience, or it may prove the mean estate of the novel itself. Either way, the conclusions are discouraging. But, presupposing that fiction is sparsely represented on these lists because the Catholic reader prefers non-fiction, we run into the same dilemma as before. The philosophic, scientific, historical or educational works on the lists of Catholic publishers are in many cases excellent. Do Catholics read them? Simple arithmetical computation from a figure over twenty million, ruling out infants, dividing by the average family size, and so on, will quickly disillusion the optimistic searcher. If Catholics did, in any numbers, read intelligently, wouldn't even the *Times* list reflect that fact by inclusion of many of the fine works offered by these publishers?

The conclusion here, too, must be that the Catholic prefers *The Egg and I*. And the general conclusion must be that a literate Catholic audience does not exist, either as Catholic or as literate.

The dismayed condition of this potentially vast reading public, which should be in every respect more acute in perception and more appreciative of that which is good than the nation as a whole, is not a spontaneous apparition; rather, it appears to have been carefully shaped and deliberately produced. Why, one cannot safely say. Yet the factors that have gone to create this end-product are visible.

One such element has already been indicated. It is the attitude of Catholic authorities, as exemplified in the parochial pastorate, that "literature" and one's uses of it are of no consequence, provided loud enough warning is given of the immoral and encouragement given to the sale of spiritual reading matter. The critical taste of the Catholic is of no particular concern, it seems, to

that portion of the hierarchy which is in the closest and widest contact with the people. The relationship of the layman to the printed page is relegated to the schools. Possibly quite properly, the Sunday sermon is never about "literature" unless some exceptionally scandalous or edifying book happens to come to the attention of a curate who obtains permission to speak about it.

The same is true when the subject is approached in any of the voluntary societies of the parish. Once in the course of a year's meetings the society will be exposed to a lecture by an eminent local Catholic critic on the latest book to have a religious connotation, maybe *The Keys of the Kingdom*, or *Brideshead Revisited*. (In many cases, however, such books are regarded as too controversial for discussion under official auspices.) But, having heard, in small numbers, the lecture on the chosen book, the society is relieved of the literary burden until the same or a similar eminent critic is invited to fill in a gap the following year. And that is, for the vast majority of the Catholic laity, the only cognizance taken by the Church of the existence of literature.

At this point, the argument may provisionally be granted that "culture," or this peculiar phase of it, "literature," is not the province, in an interested and



active sense, of the pastoral church. Literature may be the subject of experts. So far as reading best-sellers is concerned, the high school graduate is a preemi-

nent expert. We might expect then that our Catholic schools in some way would prepare a selected group of the laity for leadership in the field of reading. That they *should* is beyond question. That they do is highly dubious.

The problem of the method by which the student is brought into contact with the printed page is appropriate here, but not of paramount importance. Granting the methods in use in our schools to be of the most perfect order, we must see that the content of the school course is what really matters. It appears to be a deplorable fact, deplorable in several ways for that matter, that the graduate of our secular schools has a more mature understanding of the meaning of literature, both English and foreign, than does the scholar from a Catholic school. Consider only two curricula, in one of which the required reading includes Hardy, Lewis, and Rolvaag, while the other demands no closer attention to the possibilities of the novel than *Treasure Island* and *Fabiola*. It is specious to defend the one by reference to Stevenson's acknowledged mastery of a fine style. And the point is not that one sequence here cited is "godless," while *Fabiola* is exemplary. From the point of view of forming an intelligent adult reader, the quality and maturity of the experience that the student-readers have obtained is what we must consider.

The same is true in the field of poetry. We are confronted with a system which will spend several weeks each on the study of *Thanatopsis* and *Il Penseroso*. The



*Prisoner of Chillon* may also be mastered in segments by a reading of ten of fifteen lines a day. But no variety or wealth of acquaintance with the riches of verse is provided.

If objectors wish to go deeper into the study of collegiate levels, the same process can be followed. The test can well be to compare the reading background of the Catholic-college graduate with that of a representative of a non-sectarian university. Or, university catalogues may be consulted for the outlines of the scope and specific matter of courses. Or, as has before been suggested, consider your own classmates from college. Do you not find a group who are to all intents and purposes non-readers?

## Books

### *Time for Decision*

#### CONGRESS AT THE CROSSROADS

By George B. Galloway. Crowell. 346p. \$3.50

When the 80th Congress assembled in January, Republican and Democratic leaders were simply unable to find jobs enough for all the potential chairmen of committees. By the Congressional Reorganization Act of 1946 the number of standing committees in the Senate was cut from thirty-three to fifteen, in the House from forty-eight to nineteen. And this was only one of the changes the old-timers noticed when they trekked back to Washington and gathered on Capitol Hill.

The story of this constructive legislation goes back to the winter of 1944-1945 when Congress created a joint committee, under the able, astute leadership of former Senator Robert M. LaFollette Jr and Representative Mike Monroney, to study its organization and operation. The work of this committee has already left its mark on the Congress, and the currents it has set in motion will flow for years to come. If Congress is to fulfill the functions ordained for it by the Founding Fathers, if the Federal Government is to meet the responsibilities of a new and complex age, it is widely recognized now that some changes in our traditional way of doing things have to be made. But while all students of government recognize this, they recognize, too, that these changes must be effected with caution and delicacy, with an eye to the past as well as to the future. In re-

forming the Government, we don't want to lose America.

It is the special merit of this book that proposals for Congressional reform are studied against the background of the past as well as in the light of future needs. The author has been faithful to the purpose set forth clearly in his preface:

In the following chapters I shall undertake to analyze the evolution of the essential functions of Congress since 1789, to describe how Congress works under modern conditions, to diagnose its defects, and to prescribe a comprehensive program for its reconstruction as an effective instrument of representative government adequate to meet its responsibilities in the postwar world.

To those who know Dr. Galloway, at least by reputation, nothing that this reviewer can say will be needed to arouse their interest in his latest, and most ambitious, undertaking. To those who do not know him, it is sufficient to say that probably no man in the country is better qualified than he to discuss Congressional reform. As Chairman of the American Political Science Association's standing committee on Congress, Dr. Galloway was largely responsible for arousing public interest in the functioning of Congress, and as Staff Director for the La Follette-Monroney committee he guided the hearings which resulted finally in the writing of Congressional Reorganization Act of 1946.

*Congress at the Crossroads* is at once a history of the evolution of that body, an analysis of its weaknesses in organization and procedure, a critical summary of all the changes proposed in recent years, and a comprehensive program for reform.

It is the latter part, of course, which will stir up most interest and over

As an added force in shaping the Catholic reader, consider the most influential and most favored among the periodicals. How many of them follow the progress of the sermon in their handling of books? Have little to say of literature except to denounce as occasion demands? Or, where the positive note is struck, have aught to discuss except the peculiar pious sentimentalism that is insupportable as a criterion of the Catholic desideratum in literature?

On these fronts of education—the parish church, the school and the periodical—the Catholic is faced with a program that lays stress, by abstention and implication, upon juvenility and ignorance in the field of literature.

(To be continued.)

which there will be lively differences of opinion. In general, Dr. Galloway would go considerably beyond the Reorganization Act, and even beyond the recommendations of the La Follette-Monroney Committee. With respect to lobbies, for instance, he would not merely have them registered, as is now being done; he would strike at one of the practices which encourage private groups to manipulate the Government to their selfish advantage—he would restrict the introduction of legislation to Administration measures and committee-sponsored bills.

Indeed, he would go farther than this. As an antidote to local and group pressures, he would permit a candidate for Congress to run from any district in his State, and he even seems to look with favor on Thomas K. Finletter's suggestion that the President have the right to dissolve the legislature in the event of a deadlock, a procedure that would strengthen the national parties and weaken the power of pressure groups. And before dropping the problem of lobbies he manages to discuss proposals for functional representation, which gives some idea of the comprehensiveness of his approach. Incidentally, Catholic political scientists will find his remarks in this connection of special interest.

The present reviewer has often irritated his learned friends by inquiring whether there is any one book in their respective fields which covers the ground so thoroughly that further reading is unnecessary for a good, working knowledge. Probably there are no such books, but if there is one in the field of Congressional reform, I nominate *Congress at the Crossroads*. It has, of course, an index, a dozen or more informative tables, and everything else you would expect to find in a first-class book.

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

## The Confederacy

### EXPERIMENT IN REBELLION

By Clifford Dowdey. Doubleday. 455p. \$3.75

The title of this book is a misnomer. Actually it is a politico-economic history of the Confederate States of America, as seen from many vantage points. It tells of the origins of the movement, sketches briefly the causes of secession—and in this connection places in proper perspective the so prevalent error that secession came about and the war was fought solely because of slavery—and then sets out, in a very facile style, to tell about the difficulties that beset the new republic during its entire brief career.

A good subtitle would have been "What caused the war to last so long?" because after reading this accurate—for the most part—chronology of events and temperaments, it is almost beyond conception that the Confederacy could have lasted even two, let alone four years. The only answer, of course, lies in the amazing genius of Lee, who, despite the complete incompetence of his government, its improvident and bungling financial and supply system and its ineffective foreign policy, was able to put up such a fight that continuously, even as late as the fall of 1864, the vastly superior supplies, equipment and manpower available to the Union were completely halted and beaten in Virginia.

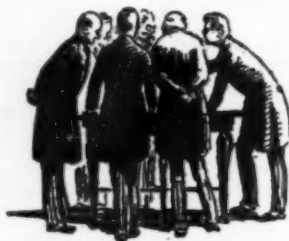
The story of the government of the Confederacy is somewhat parallel to the history of the American Revolutionary government, except in two important respects: that the Tories of the 1770's never were effectual in their efforts to divide the individual Colonies from their united support of Washington's Army, and that the Colonial American army was a single unit, under one Commander-in-Chief.

In the Confederacy, Alexander Hamilton Stephens, its Vice-President; "Fighting Bob" Toombs, soldier and politician; Governors Brown of Georgia and Vance of North Carolina, and many others, were not only Tories in the Revolutionary War sense but in practice did their best throughout the War to wreck the Confederacy. They finally succeeded.

The story of the campaign for foreign aid and recognition is an interesting one, and the parts played by the youthful Henry Hotze and James Mason, in England, and by John Slidell

in France, and others in both countries, are satisfactorily developed. The author blends together skilfully the delicate relationship between cotton and the cotton-embargo policy of the Confederacy, the blockade, military victories and defeats, and the recognition that never was forthcoming because the government could not provide its able negotiators with satisfactory evidence of stability in the political and military realms.

As for the government itself, the theme of the book is the utter impossibility of a theoretical "States' rights" democracy to conduct a successful war and still retain all of the trappings of States' rights and local self-government; where, for example, there was permitted continuous dispute as to the right of government to suspend the writ of habeas corpus; and where neither laws to draft men or property could be enforced over the objection of individual States, even in the midst of



a war for survival. Carrying out this thought, Mr. Dowdey develops rather convincingly the lack of vision of Jefferson Davis, his practical inability to command and control either his political or military followings, and his failure generally to plan broadly and command execution of what plan he did have; also his self-defeating indecisiveness. The author gives the Cabinet some rough handling, too, with the customary emphasis on the venality of Judah Benjamin. He sketches well the battles and the military history of the war.

By the lack of a Commander-in-Chief, the Confederate Armies were decimated separately. Lee, the best qualified of all the available officers, was not commissioned "General-in-Chief" until 1864. Until late 1862 he was only another subordinate officer; all the while he was in command of the Army of Northern Virginia there were other armies, other military "departments," but no coordination ever existed between any of them, and Lee had authority only over his own Army, thanks to the failure of the President to establish or delegate authority, and

thanks also to his dogged loyalty to his other appointees, civil as well as military, no matter how glaring were their failures and faults.

The "Experiment," as visualized by Mr. Dowdey, is the attempt of the President and of the States to conduct a mature "government-as-usual" in order to prove the rectitude of the cause, instead of dropping all the forms and fighting a full-dress war. Had they done the latter, or even if they had coordinated military, civil and diplomatic affairs as any mature government should, the result, in the obvious opinion of the author, would have been different.

Overall, it is a good book. It suffers from oversimplification, from the necessary telescoping of a great deal of material and from the almost complete absence of dates.

J. NICHOLAS SHRIVER, JR.

### Three Sheridan Books

#### PARADISE ALLEY I LAUGH TO THINK I CAN'T HELP LAUGHING

By John D. Sheridan. Talbot Press, Dublin, 273p. 7/6 198p. 4/-; 157p. 4/-

It is always a great satisfaction to happen on a writer who is new to you but whose work is such an agreeable surprise that you are impelled at once to share your pleasure in it with the most discriminating readers you know. This is almost sure to be the reaction to a first reading of John D. Sheridan—plus a wonder as to where this delightful Irishman has been all your life. The three books here reviewed, one novel and two collections of humorous articles, were published in Ireland in 1944, 1945 and 1946 and have not been available in this country, else they would surely be well-known and widely popular by now.

*Paradise Alley* is a novel to read and re-read, to laugh and weep over, to quote from and to remember for a long time. It is the story of a Dublin schoolmaster. Sixty-odd years in the life of Anthony Domican are covered, but it is not a long book and, when you come to the end, you wish it were longer. It is written with tenderness, wisdom and Celtic wit by a man who has a story to tell and who knows how to tell it.

Anthony Domican experiences the things that make up every life—growing up, getting a job, courtship, marriage, children who comfort and children who disappoint, small successes



and heartaches in his profession—but in the capable hands of Mr. Sheridan these often-used ingredients make up a new and wonderful whole. Woven into the plot is the counter-theme of Anthony's cousin, a successful merchant, and his labor troubles. Anthony's suggested remedies for these and for general improvement in the lives of the slum dwellers whose children are his pupils are neither socialistic nor revolutionary but eminently sane and thought-provoking.

This is a truly Catholic book, not superficially (there is no theologizing and little reference to religious externals), but deeply and soundly in its philosophy and ideals. This school-master is a greater man than Mr. Chips and yet a more recognizable one.

(For Hollywood's information: if they should ever want to make a movie of *Paradise Alley*—and a very good one it would make—Archdeacon Dunphy, "manager" of the school, is a perfect Barry Fitzgerald character.)

In Mr. Sheridan's two books of short essays, *I Can't Help Laughing* and *I Laugh to Think*, the humor which gleams irrepressibly through the more serious pages of his novel has its own way. If Leacock had the faith of Chesterton, he might have written such sketches. Some of them sound like an Irish Robert Benchley, some like a modern Charles Lamb. His humor is never bitter, never cruel. He laughs good-naturedly at himself and at the manifold incongruities of daily life, never at individuals. He respects what he laughs at and eyes the world with a kindly twinkle, never a sneer. His is the humor of Christian philosophy.

He writes of "Buying a Hat," "Getting a Haircut," "Postman's Knock," "Is Culbertson Listening?" "About Football," "Little Jobs about the House." His descriptions of the vicissitudes of parents with young children on trains, in church, on Sunday afternoon walks and in the early morning hours, are little masterpieces of uproariously realistic reporting. Whatever the subject, the reader can be sure of two things: first, that at least once on each page he will either smile sympathetically or laugh; second, that if anyone else is within hearing distance, he will be constrained frequently to read a sentence or a paragraph aloud. After that, he had better not put the book down until it is finished, for the person who has heard the samples will take possession of it and refuse to give it back.

MARY BURKE HOWE

## PREFACES TO SHAKESPEARE

By Harley Granville-Barker. Princeton University Press. 543p. \$5

This first volume of Granville-Barker's prefaces is beautifully edited, and will prove a desired addition to the library of anyone who has more than a passing acquaintance with Shakespeare.

Granville-Barker approaches Shakespeare from the viewpoint of a technician, a theatrical producer. It is obvious that such an approach will be a change from the more general run of criticism based on esthetic approaches or from interpretations that owe first responsibility to the history of ideas and to concepts and interpretations of the nature of man.

Granville Barker is not a critic in the sense that A. C. Bradley is a critic. For one thing, he has less insight into the broader Shakespearean values and he is considerably more expository. As a man primarily interested in the producing of a Shakespearean play, he tends to make an extended explanation of material already familiar to the reader, because Barker is anxious that no stage effect be missed. This approach is sometimes wearying. On the other hand, if one were producing a play, this detailed information would be of the greatest value.

Granville-Barker seldom considers the cross-currents of Shakespearean critical evaluations. He works on a *magnum opus* kind of canvas and bases his views largely on his assimilated knowledge and experience. When he does cross swords with other critics, notably J. Dover Wilson, he does so largely on the basis of what constitutes a rightful sequence of stage interpretation.

An interesting series of quotations could be made to show the light that Granville-Barker throws on the skilful use Shakespeare makes of limitations that we tend to forget or ignore. The fact that boys represented women on the Elizabethan stage would seem to be a major difficulty for any dramatist, yet Shakespeare actually uses this difficulty to deepen the presentation of what may be called the essentially feminine. He compensates for the lack of visual verisimilitude by an added dimensional insight into what constitutes woman. What the stage could not convey physically was conveyed by a firmer characterization and a subtler poetry.

It is on such points as this that Granville-Barker excels. Where he is

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—Dr. Hastings Eells, in *Monday Morning*

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dealing with more generalized analysis he is apt to be conventional in his thinking and to overlook values that depend upon a knowledge of Renaissance philosophy and on historical and social perspective. WILLIAM J. GRACE

### THE ABBE EDGEWORTH

By M. V. Woodgate. Longmans, Green. 202p. \$2.50.

The life of the Abbé Edgeworth may be divided into three periods, each brought on by sudden changes of circumstances that completely altered his manner of life. Each successive period brings out in stronger relief the great virtues of the priest, his humility, self-sacrifice and devotion to duty. Though well known in his day, he is now one of the forgotten Catholic heroes of the French Revolution.

Born in Ireland, he was brought to France at the age of four, studied for the priesthood, and for twenty years



served the poor in the slums of Paris. This was the happiest and most peaceful period of his life. There followed the bloody days of the revolution, with the imprisonment of the royal family. Madame Elizabeth, sister of King Louis XVI, asked for a confessor, and the Abbé Edgeworth was assigned to the post. He now became a regular visitor to the Tuilleries, and ministered to the spiritual needs of his royal penitent at the risk of his life. He likewise prepared Louis for death, and walked at his side to the guillotine. After that he was a proscribed man, because he had repeatedly refused to take the oath of 1891. He continued to live in the neighborhood of Paris, and acted as the Vicar General in the absence of the bishop, waiting the summons to prepare his penitent, Madame Elizabeth, for death. She was executed without the ministrations of a priest, and then only did the Abbé leave France.

Although he was offered a comfortable living in England or Ireland, the Abbé cast his lot with the exiled French king, Louis XVIII. He became his chaplain, shared his poverty and hardship in exile, and ended by dying a martyr of charity. While attending to the spiritual and physical needs of

some of the soldiers of Napoleon, the exiled king's bitterest enemy, Abbé Edgeworth contracted a contagious disease, and died at Mittau in Russia in 1807. The story is retold from the contemporary account of Charles Synde Edgeworth, published in London in 1815. HENRY WILLMERING

### THURLOW WEED

By Glyndon Van Deusen. Little, Brown. \$4

This is one of those behind-the-scenes biographies. This time it is the life story of the leading lobbyist of New York State a century ago. There were many lobbyists in those days and at the head of the class stood Thurlow Weed. His rise from hunger to riches through lobbying is all here.

Weed evidently did not believe in running for office: rather, he preferred to elect his puppets and then manipulate the political strings for profit. He was a journalist politician in the sense that he used his very effective pen to amass political power. Weed moved on Albany in the 1830's, and from that capital he wielded increasing influence through the next four decades. He master-minded the start of the Whig Party. When its usefulness was over, he assisted at the birth of the present Republican Party. The author has done a constructive job in describing the prominence of Weed in State, Federal and, during the Civil War, international politics.

The more interesting chapters of this biography of a "wizard of the lobby" deal with the off-stage activities of Thurlow Weed before the 1860 presidential election on behalf of his favorite candidate, William H. Seward. As history fortunately records, a lanky man from Illinois won over the Weedian candidate and was President through the tragic years of the early 1860's.

Thurlow Weed was at heart a lobbyist. He hobnobbed with bank presidents and railroad presidents and solid, wealthy merchants, all of whom were financially interested in the passage of some particular bill. As the author puts it: "Of Weed's patriotism there can be no question . . . as to his wealth, some of it was certainly made in questionable ways. No man possessed of Weed's vast political power should pilot bills for pay, or act as the agent for a railroad." Again, the author says: "Weed's cotton trading during wartime was at least of doubtful propriety."



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## ★ *On the Enormity of Sin:*

With the old Fathers and spiritual writers, leprosy was a favorite symbol of sin. Not a bad one, either, if our imagination is strong enough to make us squirm uncomfortably at the thought of the inner ugliness that we succeed so cleverly in concealing from the world. They used stronger language than we do, these older writers, who spoke of the stench of sin, of its foulness in the sight of God. And surely they were right, even mild in their rightness, for there is nothing more unbearable than the first corruption that follows death, and sin is death.

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'This refers to the amazing amount of Southern cotton that passed openly through the Union lines and was sold in Northern ports at an immense profit. Nowhere does the author come out and say this arch lobbyist was a thief. He skirts around the accusation, employing innumerable paraphrases. However, author Van Deusen does pluck the correct chord when he writes that Thurlow Weed "was more interested . . . in the end than he was in the means by which the end was achieved." That goes for a lot of striped-suited men in Sing Sing today.

To Thurlow Weed's eternal credit let it be recorded that this lobbyist championed the heroic Archbishop John Hughes in his fight for the rights of Catholics during the dark ages of Know-Nothingism in New York City and State.

NEIL BOYTON

## The Word

CHRYSOSTOM, IN ONE OF HIS several tributes to St. Paul, declared that the heart of this great apostle "might be called without error the heart of the whole world . . . That heart was so expansive as to receive within it whole cities, peoples and nations." In those words he merely developed the compact epigram *Cor Pauli, Cor Christi*—the heart of Paul was the heart of Christ.

Sexagesima Sunday particularly honors the apostle. Through the Epistle of the Mass, longest of the year, one can feel the seismic heart-beat of Christ's indefatigable envoy.

In dissolute Corinth, Paul, by zealous prayer and work, had established a Christian nucleus. All around his little flock swirled the full foulness of paganism, and he continually worried

lest his neophytes be inoculated with worldliness. Titus, his disciple, reporting from the field, confirmed his worst fears and occasioned his second letter to Corinth, a letter which is intensely personal and passionately sincere.

False prophets and pseudo-apostles had confused the Christian Corinthians and split them into quarreling factions. They had impugned Paul's apostolate, undermined his authority, jeered at his unprepossessing person (2 Cor. 10:10). This section of his letter is a review of his credentials, a defense of his life and teaching.

He is a Hebrew, he tells them, an Israelite, a minister of Christ, and more—an apostle. On his broken body he carried the scars of his love for Jesus Christ. Scourgings, stoning, shipwreck, labor, hardship, hunger, thirst, cold, nakedness, betrayals and the constant agony of anxiety lest his converts fall away again, had wounded his body and his soul. Not only had he suffered for Christ; he had received great favors from Him; and he passes from a catalog of his crosses to give them a glimpse of the mystical heights to which God had elevated him.

It is a thrilling revelation of Paul's love for his Lord, which throws into humiliating contrast our own petty devotion and limited service. It is an *apologia*, but despite the prominence of the personal pronoun, it is primarily a hymn of humility. For all of these sufferings were endured, all these glories enjoyed, through the power of God. As for Paul himself: "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that concern my weakness"; and again, "I will glory in nothing save in my infirmities." Even after these human vexations and divine visitations, Paul was still tormented by some persistent illness. But when he begged God for relief, the answer came: "My grace is

sufficient for thee, for strength is made perfect in weakness."

Christ Himself had told us: "when you have done everything that was commanded you, say: 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what it was our duty to do'" (Luke 17:10). Hence Paul, the tireless herald of Christ, was not exalted either by the labors he sustained or the favors he received, but humbly acknowledged: "For when I am weak, then am I strong."

If that was his reaction to his heroic ministries, what should our reflections be, since we are so far from "doing everything that was commanded." The prayer of the Sexagesima Mass puts words into our mouths that should induce an attitude in our minds: "O God, Who seest that we put not our trust in anything that we do of ourselves; mercifully grant that by the protection of the Apostle of the Gentiles, we may be defended against all adversities."

But to make that prayer intelligently and sincerely, we must be certain that we have not fallen into the heresy of self-sufficiency or into spiritual pride or smugness of soul.

WILLIAM A. DONAGHY, S.J.

## Theatre

STREET SCENE. If the story had been written as a novel instead of a play, the obvious take-off would be an ambulance call. The interne, arriving in Yorkville, Harlem, Delancy Street or any of the less favored neighborhoods of any big city, would learn that a man had surprised his wife with her lover and shot them. When the ambulance arrives the wounded man is already dead, but the woman is a stretcher case with a slight chance to live. The crowd gapes as she is brought out of the house and speculates on whether she will recover and if the vengeful husband will be caught. A similar tragedy might lie behind any ambulance call.

While the triangle dominates the story, it is not the whole story. It is only part of the mosaic of life in a tenement house on a summer night and the following day. The weather is hot, and while the tenants sit on the stoop or lean out of windows for a breath of air, the life indoors spills out of the house in the form of gossip and scraps of scandal. Elmer Rice, the author, appears to write casually, but his observa-



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tion is far from casual. The apparently aimless gossip reveals the hopes, anxieties, passions and conflicts that throb in the house. Children are preparing for graduation exercises, a family is about to be evicted, a young father is nervously expecting a baby. Superficially, they are formed of the atmosphere of the street, bits of moving scenery; but in reality they are not nonentities but vital, purposeful individuals. That is what gives the tragedy its force.

*Street Scene* was a successful play several years back, and later a popular motion picture. The author has converted his dialog into a libretto, Kurt Weil has given the story an eloquent musical interpretation and Langston Hughes has contributed some effective lyrics. The result of their combined efforts is an opera which, while it may not be as highfalutin' as the article on sale in the Metropolitan, is good to look at, pleasing to the ear, and as American as a "Coke."

Charles Friedman directed the production, has a right to be proud. Jo Meilziner's set and lighting admirably sustain the mood of the story, while Lucinda Ballard's costumes and the dances by Anna Sokolow rate three rousing cheers.

In the leading roles the emphasis is on singing rather than acting, but Polyna Stoska, Norman Cordon and Anne Jeffreys are persuasive enough. They are good in their singing chores and in one number, *There'll Be Trouble*, they make an effective trio. A number of fetching songs are assigned to secondary characters. *I Got a Marble and a Star*, *Wrapped in a Ribbon and Tied in a Bow* and *Moon-Faced Starry-Eyed* are tunes you will be hearing on the air before long.

The producers are Dwight Deere Wiman and The Playwrights' Company. They have a grand show in the Adelphi.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

## Films

**THE SHOCKING MISS PILGRIM.** The fact that this film makes much of feminism is enough to stamp it as a period piece even without the added hint of costumery, and now that what Oscar Wilde called the tyranny of the weak over the strong has become an accomplished fact, even male audiences may be amused at this side-light

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on history. Technicolor and musical  
trimmings combine to raise the uneven  
story to the level of a libretto, and  
some unpublished tunes by the late  
George Gershwin lend further interest  
to the production. A Boston heroine of  
the 1870's arrives in New York to be-  
come a "typewriter," but her career  
is complicated by the fact that her  
boss is also her boy-friend, and his at-  
titude toward the Ibsen Girl is far  
from encouraging. The happy ending  
is a foregone conclusion. George Sea-  
ton's direction is as smooth as the  
script will allow, and the appeal to  
quaintness is wholesomely engaging.  
Betty Grable and Dick Haymes are  
pleasant in the romantic leads, with  
good support from Anne Revere and  
Alan Joslyn. This is bright, if not bril-  
liant, family entertainment. (*Twentieth  
Century-Fox*)

SINBAD THE SAILOR. Escapism  
reaches some sort of peak in this color-  
ful account of Sinbad's apocryphal  
eighth voyage, which makes the others  
in the Arabian Nights sound like ex-  
cerpts from the log-book of an inland  
ferry. The story line has more than  
its share of oriental vagueness, and  
the picture's chief charm is pictorial  
and energetic, as Douglas Fairbank Jr.  
takes a leaf from his father's prompt-  
book. Sinbad's boasts about buried  
treasure turn up some scheming ras-  
cals, who are disposed of before the  
revelation that the prize is the wealth  
that lies in the hearts of the people.  
There is action enough to compensate  
for the florid dialogue, and Richard  
Wallace has allowed the plot to de-  
teriorate into a pretense. Maureen  
O'Hara, Walter Slezak and George To-  
bias are also involved. The techni-  
colored production is a bit too bounc-  
ing for fantasy, but it is a beautifully  
photographed approximation of an  
old fairy-tale suitable for the family.  
(*RKO*)

WAKE UP AND DREAM. Continuing  
this week's trend toward technicolor  
and elfin fancy, this yarn justifies the  
optimism of a little girl whose brother  
has been reported missing in service.  
She determines to rescue him from the  
tropic isle on which she is certain he  
has been marooned, and the search ac-  
tually begins through a series of mar-  
velous accidents, including the forced  
sailing of a dry-land boat. The lost  
man's fiancée is along, so that youth-  
ful faith and adult romance are  
brought to a happy conclusion when-



the brother brings the Coast Guard to the aid of the stranded rescuers. It is doubtful that Lloyd Bacon could have done more or less with the original story, and June Haver, John Payne and Connie Marshall are forced to carry their own vehicle most of the way. *Family* film-goers will have to be satisfied with simple comedy and pathos, leavened with provocative shots of the bayou country, to compensate for an experiment in fantasy which does not come off. (*Twentieth Century-Fox*)

**ALIAS MR. TWILIGHT.** The age-old tendency of nursemaids to flirt with policemen is one of the few realistic observations in this minor film. An engaging old confidence man who has been doubling as a doting grandfather for years discovers that he cannot continue his occult career without menacing the sheltered life of his granddaughter. A bit of blackmail brings the business to a climax, and the grifter sacrifices his freedom for the girl's happiness. There is more sentimentality than sense of guilt in the solution. Lloyd Corrigan, Michael Duane and Trudy Marshall are featured in a rather weak offering for adults. (*Columbia*)

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

## Parade

That man's inhumanity to man is still going strong was demonstrated by the week's news. . . . The clash of opinions begot not a little of this inhumanity. . . . During an argument, a Chicago taxi driver bit off the ear of a fellow driver. . . . Biting as an expression of dissent appeared also in the East. . . . When a Pennsylvania dentist clung to the belief that his bill should be fifty dollars instead of ten, a patient, equipped with new false teeth, bit the dentist's finger. Cost of the bite for the patient was twenty-five dollars, a sum figured out by a judge. . . . Poking was used to register dissent in Michigan. . . . A bridal party in Benton Harbor, Mich., was ready to proceed to the church when a argument broke out between the bride and groom. The groom poked the bride in the mouth, whereupon the bride's father gave the groom away to the police. Fined, repentant, the groom effected a reconciliation. A second attempt to reach the altar proved successful. The cou-

ple were married; set up housekeeping. . . . Unconcern for the feelings of others also contributed to the general inhumanity. . . . A California wrestler, to save the expense of a sparring partner, practised his judo wrestling holds on his wife. Numb, the wife petitioned a judge to make her spouse contort with a regular wrestler. . . . Insensibility to the well-being of the fellow man was by no means confined to California. . . . When a Connecticut husband arrived home ten minutes late for dinner, his wife threw the dinner at him, the dinner consisting of turkey, gravy, dressing, mashed potatoes, turnips and several greens. On a previous occasion, she had manifested a want of wifely affection by trying to run him down with an auto. . . . Cooling of wifely affection also appeared in Georgia, where an estranged wife stole the artificial leg and the auto of her husband. The husband filed suit for the return of his leg and auto. . . . Characters lacking in idealism spread social distress. . . . In California, a man issued hundreds of dollars worth of phoney checks to finance a business established for the purpose of protecting bankers and merchants from forgers and rubber check artists. . . . A combination of low ideals and long-buried stick-up techniques occasioned grief in Oregon. . . . In Portland, Ore., a non-idealist, armed with a three-foot sword, held up a grocery store, took all the cash, ran out brandishing his sword.

Commenting on the modern scene, the lady president of the Widows and Widowers' Club declared: "The Age of Chivalry is dead—the world is now living in the Age of Chiselry." . . . The decline of chivalry derives from the decline of religion. . . . Chivalry—in its connotation of respect for the rights and feelings of others—has for its very breath of life the love and service of God. . . . True love of neighbor, in a word, has but one source: true love of God. . . . In the modern air, foggy with forgetfulness of God, chivalry withers away and dies. . . . Where there is no concern for the rights of God there will be no concern for the rights of man. . . . Thus, chivalry—the exaltation of God above self—is moving out; and chiselry—the exaltation of self above God—is moving in; moving in and increasing man's inhumanity to man. . . . When man does not love his Father in Heaven, it is hard to see how he can truly love his brothers on earth.

JOHN A. TOOMEY

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# Correspondence

## Two views of law

EDITOR: May I draw attention to a couple of quotations which seem to have some significance at the present moment? The first is from Judge Frank M. Padden, Superior Court of Cook County (Chicago), in refusing to dismiss a suit for enforcement of a racial restrictive covenant, Jan. 6, 1947:

I have enjoyed your fine argument and I agree with it, but I have to follow the law. It's been decided so often, and many other judges in this building have ruled the same way. The law is that while a public official and public places cannot discriminate, private persons can.

The other is from Pope Pius XII, in his address on the social order, December 24, 1942:

He who would have the star of peace shine out and stand over social life should collaborate towards a complete rehabilitation of the juridical order. . . . The juridical order has the high and difficult scope of insuring harmonious relations both between individuals and between societies, and within these. This scope will be reached if legislators will abstain from following those perilous theories and practices, so harmful to communities and to their spirit of union, which derive their origin and promulgation from false postulates. Among such postulates we must count the juridical positivism which attributes a deceptive majesty to the setting up of purely human laws, and which leaves the way open for a fatal divorce of law from morality. . . .

Chicago, Ill. JOHN DOEBELE

## Data on Cardinal Von Galen

EDITOR: I am collecting material on the life and work of His Eminence Clemens August Cardinal von Galen, late Bishop of Muenster, Germany, with a view to writing a biography of this great prelate whose heroic defense of the rights of God and His Church as well as the dignity of the human personality entitles him to be remembered with admiration and gratitude.

It is my hope that Chaplains, members of the various relief and economic missions, who had official contacts with the Cardinal, and others who knew him, will share with me their knowledge of his life and conduct. It will help if I can secure the names and ad-

resses of persons now resident in Germany and who would be likely to have information. I would also like to hear from anyone who remembers the Cardinal as a young priest in Berlin, or later as Bishop of Muenster.

No item is too small or insignificant to be useful in giving me a comprehensive knowledge of the Cardinal's life and personality. Therefore, I am hoping that those who do know something will not hesitate to get in touch with me merely because they fear that what they know might not be very important.

BRENDAN A. FINN

37 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Somerville 45, Massachusetts

## Nathan Report

EDITOR: The comment on "Prices and Profits" in the January 11th issue indicates that by concentrating on three fundamental facts one can understand what the controversy over the Nathan Report is all about.

It seems to me that by concentrating on only three of the many facts contained in the Nathan Report one merely follows the CIO line. By reading the whole report and discovering that it contains more than three facts one can become at least less ignorant of their existence.

You remind us that people can only be ignorant of facts, but imply that in this instance only three facts need be considered. You do nothing to dispel the ignorance of facts which to me seem of equal importance.

For instance, why is the fact that the October, 1946 real weekly earnings of workers in manufacturing showed a decline on an average of 21% from those of January, 1945 any more important than the fact that in the fourth quarter of 1946 aggregate wage and salary payments were running at a rate only 2% below the 1944 average and 5% below the first quarter of the 1945 peak? Does not the report in question also show that wage and salary payments in the fourth quarter of 1946 were 150% above the prewar 1939 average, while consumer price index was but 49% above the 1939 average?

In the Editorial column I enjoy a

clever argument, but under the heading of "Comments" I prefer more honest reporting.

FRANCIS G. DEMPSEY

Richmond Hill, N. Y.

(The "Comment on the Week" is not intended to be straight reporting, as, indeed, the title indicates. The isolation of three facts as a key to an understanding of the controversy over the Nathan Report is an interpretation of the news, about which, it is obvious, there can be a difference of opinion. They seem to be the key facts to us because they reflect the determined effort of workers to maintain wartime standards of living which has characterized industrial relations since V-J Day. That many industrialists agree with this opinion is clear from their counter-argument that labor should be satisfied with present wage levels and become more interested in productivity. This is just another way of saying that labor can achieve its goal by helping to lower costs and prices—an argument which involves an implicit acceptance of labor's goal and a denial that the relatively low living standards of 1939 have anything to do with the present controversy. Editor.)

## Evening Latin Classes

EDITOR: I wonder if any of your readers would be interested in the following notice:

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New York, N. Y. HOWARD QUIRK

## Marriage course by mail

EDITOR: It was with great pleasure that I read in AMERICA, January 11, your article on our marriage course by mail. Though we receive your fine magazine, this issue had not yet arrived when we first learned of it through some person who had read about it in AMERICA asking for the course. I mention this because I consider it a tribute to your magazine that it prompts people to action.

(REV.) ANDREW L. GUAY, O.M.I.

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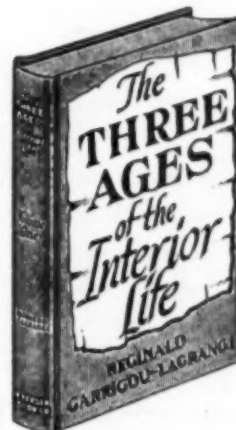
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